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U.S. official sees special Gulf tax

BOCA RATON, Florida (R) — The head of the U.S. Senate Budget Committee called Saturday for President George Bush to impose a special tax to finance war in the Gulf if fighting breaks out. "If the situation deteriorates, if we get into a full-blown war in the Middle East, I think it is going to be incumbent on the president to propose some type of surtax or some other type of measure to pay for the war," said the budget committee chairman, James Sasser, a Democrat. "We simply cannot continue to borrow to finance a war to protect the oil supply for our friends in Japan and Western Europe," Sasser told reporters after addressing the Securities Industry Association (SIA) convention. The tax might take the form of a temporary income surcharge, such as the 10 percent levy imposed in 1969 to finance the Vietnam war, Sasser said. Sasser noted U.S. allies have failed to provide substantial financing for the military presence in Saudi Arabia.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية مستقلة تصدر عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية



Syria ready to deploy more troops

ABU DHABI (AP) — Syrian Defence Minister Mustafa Tlas says Damascus is ready to send more troops to the Gulf to help confront Iraq, the state-owned Al Itihad daily reported Saturday. "Our forces in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are to defend these two countries and we are ready to increase their number to half a million if requested" by King Fahd of Saudi Arabia and Sheikh Zayed, president of the UAE, he said. Syria's armed forces total some 400,000 men, with about the same number of reserves. But the flamboyant Tlas' mention of deploying as many as 500,000 men was seen as a means of emphasising Syria's commitment to the U.S.-led multinational force in the Gulf rather than a pledge to send virtually half of Syria's military manpower to the region. Syria is a bitter rival of Iraq. But it has some 40,000 troops in Lebanon and several divisions on Iraq's northern border. It is also unlikely to strip its defences against Israel to bolster a force that by mid-January will total in excess of 550,000 personnel.

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50th American casualty in S. Arabia

SAUDI ARABIA (AP) — An American with the U.S. air force 4th tactical fighter wing's civil engineering squadron was killed Saturday in a vehicle accident, military officials said. The accident occurred at 5:40 a.m. at an air base in Saudi Arabia, and the air force is investigating. He was the 50th U.S. serviceman to die since the deployment began. Of those, two were from natural causes and one was a suicide.

Sudan to use conscripts against rebels

KHARTOUM (R) — All Sudanese aged between 16 and 70 are to be conscripted into a militia fighting southern rebels, an official newspaper said Saturday. Al Hadeth newspaper quoted Brigadier Babiker Abdul Mahmud, commander of the Popular Defence Forces, as saying the call-up would take place over five years. It gave no other details. The militia was formed a year ago to help the regular army fight the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA), which has been battling since 1983 for more autonomy for southern regions.

Bush 'trial' in Algiers called off

ALGIERS (R) — Lawyers organising a mock trial of U.S. President George Bush over the Gulf crisis cancelled the event Saturday after criticism from the Algerian government. Ali Ammar Laouar, president of a preparatory committee, said the government had in effect banned the event by denouncing it on Friday as interference in the country's foreign policy.

Seven Iraqis executed in Kuwait

NICOSIA (AP) — Iraqi authorities have hanged seven Iraqis in Kuwait for burglary and other crimes, Baghdad's Al Jomhuriya daily reported Saturday. Six of the men had been convicted by a civilian criminal court of stealing from several premises in Kuwait City, the newspaper said. The seventh, a goldsmith, was convicted of buying a "large quantity of jewellery from the thieves, the daily said. It reported that the victims of the burglaries witnessed the executions.

Somali minister arrives in Cairo

CAIRO (AP) — Somali Foreign Minister Ahmad Mohammad Aden arrived Saturday in Cairo where he will meet his Egyptian counterpart Esmat Abdul Meguid to discuss peace talks on Somalia to be held here later this month. The government-run Middle East News Agency (MENA) said Aden's visit to Egypt came in response to Abdul Meguid's invitation. It said he will stay here a few days but did not specify when the two ministers will meet. Cairo will host Somali government and rebel representatives on Dec. 11 and 12 in talks aimed at ending the insurgency and violence in that country. Italy, Somalia's former colonial ruler, will also attend the peace talks. But the Somali National Movement said neither it nor two other major rebel groups planned to attend what it described as a "bogus meeting."

Mozambique, rebels reach partial truce

ROME (AP) — The Mozambique government and the Renamo rebel group Saturday reached a partial ceasefire agreement which will be monitored by eight countries, including the United States and the Soviet Union. The accord, signed in Rome after a mediation effort by Italy and a Roman Catholic charity organisation, would lead to the grouping of an estimated 30,000 Zimbabwe troops, who are assisting the Mozambique government, into two corridors in the Beira and Limpopo River area. The agreement provides for the eight-nation monitoring committee, Mozambique, the Renamo group and Italy to meet around mid-December in Rome to coordinate efforts to end the 15-year-old civil war.

Iraq accepts U.S. call for talks, says Palestine issue should be included

Combined agency dispatches

THE IRAQI government Saturday welcomed talks to resolve the Gulf crisis, but urged U.S. President George Bush to accept a "serious and deep dialogue" that would include the Palestinian question, the Iraqi News Agency (INA) reported. The Revolutionary Command Council chaired by President Saddam Hussein issued a statement that was receptive but wary in response to Bush's offer, the news agency said. "Palestine and the other occupied Arab territories remain before our eyes and at the forefront of the issues that we will discuss in any dialogue," the statement said (see full text on page 4).

Earlier Saturday, thousands of Iraqis chanting "Death to Bush" marched in government-orchestrated protests in Baghdad and other cities.

Iraq's policy will "be as it has always been, conducting a serious and deep dialogue and not holding informal meetings with America's president has wanted," said the council statement.

U.S. Charge d'Affaires Joe Wilson had a brief meeting on Saturday evening with Foreign Ministry Under Secretary Nizar Hamdoun, official sources said.

A U.S. embassy spokesman would confirm only that Wilson had met a senior Iraqi official and said any further news on the meeting would be released in Washington.

Hours after winning U.N. authorisation to go to war, Bush on Friday offered to send Secretary of State James Baker to Baghdad and invited Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz to Washington in

Bush offer to Iraq draws wide international support

Combined agency dispatches

U.S. PRESIDENT George Bush's offer to open direct talks with Iraq over the Gulf crisis has drawn wide international welcome, including members of the American-led anti-Iraq alliance and countries which are seen sympathetic to the Iraqi cause.

Bush telephoned Saudi Arabia's King Fahd and Kuwait's emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah Friday night to discuss the Gulf crisis, the Saudi Press Agency reported. The telephone diplomacy took place after Bush invited Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz to Washington for talks on the Gulf crisis. He also offered to send Secretary of State James Baker to Baghdad.

The Saudi agency said in a separate report that King Fahd also received a call from Egyptian leader Hosni Mubarak, a key ally in the anti-Iraq alliance.

Saudi Arabian and Kuwait officials said Friday that they welcomed the offer by Bush to meet with Iraqi officials, but stressed that they are ready for war.

"It's either heads or tails. Either withdrawal completely or be kicked out of Kuwait," said Mohammad Khayat, an official with the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Information.

Fahd Abdul Aziz, a professor at Kuwait University and a volunteer in the Kuwaiti information office in Saudi Arabia, said he doubted whether diplomacy would work.

Egypt's Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Boutros Ghali said that Egypt welcomed the offer as it gave priority to a peaceful settlement.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) welcomed the Bush offer and said it could be a turning point in the history of the Middle East.

"The U.S. president's decision is a step in the right direction," PLO spokesman Yasser Arafat said in Tunis.

"We hope the agenda for dialogue will include all regional issues, including rapid holding of an international peace conference and international protection for our people under (Israeli) occupation," he said.

Crown Prince extends cautious welcome to U.S. move to open contacts with Iraq

AMMAN (J.T.) — The American move to establish direct contact with Iraq over the Gulf crisis is a welcome development as long as its ultimate goal is to address the basic roots of the conflict and regional peace, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan said Saturday.

In two television interviews, the Crown Prince also underlined the need for urgent political and diplomatic action to address the Palestinian problem, particularly in light of recent statements by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir that Israel would keep the occupied Arab territories for Jewish immigrants.

"The bitterness today, particularly the polarisation of religious extremes which seem to be almost taking over from a conflict of sovereign, is very, very worrying," the Crown Prince said in an interview with Britain's World Television News (WTN). "Unless political and diplomatic action is taken soon, it will be very difficult to retrace the original thread of argument, particularly with the changes taking place in the occupied territories so swiftly and of course the question of further migration into the occupied territories which Mr. Shamir touched on in his last remarks," he said.

The Gulf crisis was the focal theme in an interview with Cable News Network (CNN) in the interview, the Crown Prince pointed out that one of the essential components of Security Council Resolution 660 is a call for direct negotiations between Iraq and Kuwait to settle their conflict

under the umbrella of the Arab League. "Paragraph 3 of Resolution 660 has to be fully implemented," he said.

The Crown Prince voiced hope that the latest American initiative, proposed by President George Bush Friday, would offer the opportunity for both the U.S. and Iraq to move towards resolving the Gulf crisis without losing face.

At the same time, he also expressed hope that the American move was not a tactic aimed at gaining time for U.S. troops to complete their deployment in Saudi Arabia and elsewhere in the Gulf. "Both parties, over the past few weeks, have made statements... Iraq made statements about the release of hostages and moved troops, President Bush yesterday made a statement of

initiating discussions with the Iraqi foreign minister and correspondingly a visit by the secretary of state to Baghdad and again moved 300 aircraft, and 200,000 troops would be in position by the end of January," he pointed out. "Let us hope that this is not a tactic; that it is really a strategic investment in peace not only between Iraq and Kuwait but also in the Gulf region as a whole."

In his comments to WTN on the same subject, the Crown Prince said the American move, in principle, represented what Jordan had always called for. While he said he did not know whether Jordan had any direct or indirect role in producing such an initiative, "certainly indirectly it is an indication of everything that

(Continued on page 5)

Jordan welcomes Iraqi acceptance of U.S. call

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Foreign Ministry Saturday welcomed Iraq's acceptance of the United States initiative to open a dialogue over the Gulf crisis.

A ministry spokesman said that the Iraqi decision was in harmony with the Iraqi leadership's repeated calls for dialogue among the concerned parties to avoid danger and military confrontation.

The spokesman said that the new developments could pave the ground for an opportune climate that will be conducive to reaching permanent peace in the Middle East which lacks stability and security at the moment.

The spokesman, quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, expressed hope that the dialogue between Baghdad and Washington would mark a boost for peace-loving people and a set back for all those voices which call for the use of force.

Earlier, the government welcomed the initiative by U.S. President George Bush to negotiate with Iraqi officials a settlement to the Gulf crisis.

"We welcome Mr. Bush's initiative," Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem said. "This decision complies with Jordan's proposal calling for dialogue to end the Gulf crisis."

Speaking to the Associated Press in a telephone interview, Qasem said: Through dialogue, there is an opportunity for the whole world to get acquainted with the causes of the crisis."

Qasem was commenting on Bush's announcement Friday that he will dispatch Secretary of State James Baker to Baghdad to discuss an end to Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait.

Bush also invited Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz to Washington.

(Continued on page 2)

Israeli soldiers kill Palestinian woman

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israeli police Saturday shot to death a Palestinian woman after she tried to stab a policeman near Jerusalem's walled Old City, police and radio reports said.

The policeman was not hurt because he was wearing a flak jacket. The protective jackets became mandatory for police patrols in Arab Jerusalem after a spate of stabbing attacks by Palestinians against police in the wake of the Oct. 8 massacre of over 20 Palestinians at Haram Al Sharif.

Saturday's incident began at about 10:40 a.m. when police questioned three Palestinians at the Arab Jerusalem bus station opposite the Old City's Damascus Gate, Israel radio said.

Suddenly a woman emerged from the crowd and lunged towards one of the policemen with a knife, a police spokesman said. The knife did not penetrate the flak jacket.

Another policeman opened fire, shooting the woman in the head. She was taken in serious condition to Jerusalem's Hadassah hospital where she later died, police said.

The woman, in her 40s, wore a traditional embroidered Palestinian dress and pink headscarf, a witness told the AP.

She could not be identified because she did not carry an ID card, the radio said.

Another policeman suffered cuts in the hand during the scuffle with the assailant.

In the occupied Gaza Strip, two suspected Palestinian informants were killed by masked assailants.

In the Bureij refugee camp, after the attack, the police said.

Israelis rocket Palestinian bases in Bekaa Valley

BEIRUT (AP) — Israeli fighter-bombers rocketed Palestinian bases in southeast Lebanon Saturday for the second time in a week as Lebanon complained to the United Nations about repeated Israeli attacks into its territory.

Police said two Israeli jets fired four rockets into a base used by the Palestine Popular Struggle Front (PSF) in the Bekaa Valley at midday (1000 GMT), wounding five guerrillas.

Police said the jets dropped scintillating hot-air balloons to deflect missiles, but none was fired.

PSF guerrillas opened up on the raiding jets with anti-aircraft guns, but no hits were reported.

The estimated 20,000 Syrian soldiers deployed in the Bekaa were not involved in the action, police said.

The spokesman said the Israeli rockets scored direct hits on a one-storey building used by the PSF as its local headquarters in the Bekaa town of Taalabaya, about 70 kilometres north of the Israeli border.

The Israeli military said the raid was in retaliation for an attempted infiltration Nov. 20 by PSF guerrillas in South Lebanon. An Israeli lieutenant was killed along with four guerrillas in a firefight.

A PSF spokesman, reached by telephone in Beirut, told the Associated Press: "We lost contact with the base immediately after it was attacked."

Bush seen losing public support

WASHINGTON (AP) — Just as he has won the world's authority to wage war against Iraq, U.S. President George Bush is losing the assent of many of his own citizens.

The country may be losing its appetite for going to war.

The Roman Catholic clergy is dubious; the polls have turned against the president's handling of the crisis; and now politicians are embracing an argument he seems to be abandoning — that economic sanctions against Iraq will work if given enough time.

Bush's task in carrying public opinion with him is likely to become even more difficult now that some old soldiers — like Admiral William Crowe and Air Force General David Jones, both former chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff — are speaking out against immediate hostilities.

They say sanctions should be given more time to work.

The criticism of Bush's policies legitimates dissent.

"People pay attention to these people," said John E. Mueller, author of "Wars, Presidents and Public Opinion" and a political scientist at the University of Rochester. "Their job is to figure out things for the American people, and the people listen."

Doubts about the immediate necessity of a war are likely to grow now that the United Nations Security Council has set a Jan. 15 deadline for Iraq to pull out of Kuwait.

Sam Kernell, a specialist on presidents and public opinion at the University of California, San Diego, said the fact that "ordinary members of Congress are beginning to speak out" has two meanings: Politicians are sensing where public sentiment is shifting and that shift will gain momentum as more politicians weigh in.

Witnesses at Senate hearings may hedge and offer subtleties and caveats, but "what the American people are hearing is that war doesn't make sense right now."

It's not that people don't understand why Bush is taking on Iraq, contends Robert W. Tucker, a retired professor of diplomacy at Johns Hopkins University. They do, but they don't think Bush's reasons justify going to war, they don't see "a case of national necessity."

"Neither reasonably priced oil nor international order nor even the prospect of an Iraq stripped of weapons of mass destruction" has persuaded the public "to accept the hazards of war in the

(Continued on page 5)

New medical books
New computer books
at the University of Jordan exhibition

U.S. unlikely to block mild resolution to protect Palestinians

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The United States, having won Security Council sanction for the use of force against Iraq, indicated Friday that it would not veto a moderate resolution on protection of Palestinians in the Israeli-occupied territories.

The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) meanwhile, complained that the U.S. government had stalled in granting a visa to the PLO's foreign minister, Farouk Qaddoumi, to attend the annual General Assembly debate on Palestinians.

The United States, which has no diplomatic relations with the PLO, granted the visa Wednesday night and Qaddoumi was expected to visit New York next week on U.N. business and was likely to address the assembly.

Western diplomats, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the United States had let the PLO and its allies know that if they didn't inject the Palestine issue into debate on Thursday, the U.S. government would seriously consider a moderate resolution on Palestinians and might abstain, allowing it to pass.

On Thursday, at U.S. urging, the council authorised the United States and its allies in the Gulf to use military force to expel Iraq from Kuwait if it does not withdraw by Jan. 15.

The United States, president of the council for the month of November, had not wanted the

Palestinian issue to interfere with its push for approval of the use-of-force resolution on Thursday.

A negative vote or an abstention from the United States on a tough resolution calling for U.N. observers to protect Palestinians in the occupied territories could offend the Arab members of the coalition against Iraq.

The United States succeeded in putting off the Palestinian issue until Yemen takes over the presidency of the council in December. The question of protecting Palestinians is expected to be taken up next week.

The PLO, Yemen, Cuba, Colombia and Malaysia had complained bitterly that the United States had blocked consideration of their original resolution, which had been presented to the council more than three weeks ago.

That resolution, which was certain to provoke a U.S. veto, called for deployment of U.N. observers in the Israeli-occupied territories to safeguard Palestinians from human rights abuses. It also called for a meeting of the 164 high contracting parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention to ensure that Israel protects civilians in the occupied territories.

Israel has rejected such a resolution and said it expects a veto from its U.S. ally.

But this week Finland presented a milder counter-resolution, calling for a U.N.

ombudsman, with U.N. support, to look into the Palestinian situation, it also welcomed convening a conference to ensure protection of Palestinian rights.

Israel rejects that formulation as well. But Israeli sources indicated the Finnish proposal was not as offensive as the original resolution.

Meanwhile, the General Assembly continued discussion Friday of the Palestinian situation. Most speakers called for Israel's withdrawal from the territories it has occupied since the 1967 war and for an international Middle East peace conference.

Israeli Ambassador Yoram Aridor, in a speech to the assembly Friday, repeated Israel's position that it was ready to make peace with its neighbours on a bilateral basis, as it had done with Egypt.

Aridor also complained that the United Nations, which now condemns Iraq for overrunning Kuwait, "in 1948 did nothing to stop the combined onslaught of seven of its Arab member-states who pounced upon Israel in order to destroy the new Jewish state."

Israel's right to exist, he said, had been recognised in the mandate of the League of Nations and the U.N. General Assembly.

"Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East, gets special, separate and unequal treatment from this assembly on a consistent basis," he said.

Experts say U.S. crying wolf over Iraq

WASHINGTON (AP) — Atomic experts clashed Friday over whether Iraq possesses a nuclear device, and Democrats accused President George Bush of overstating the immediate threat.

"The overwhelming impression that was given by these statements is of an Iraq that is of imminent nuclear danger to us almost immediately," said Sen. John Glenn. "I think they're overblown."

Three nuclear experts debated Iraq's nuclear weapons programme during Senate Armed Services Committee hearings that came one week after Bush raised the nuclear specter in a visit with U.S. troops in the Gulf.

Bush told the troops Iraq is further along in its nuclear weapons programme than previously thought. This past Wednesday, the White House said Bush had received intelligence briefings that led him to conclude Iraq had a nuclear capability "that could come to fruition within months."

Democrats questioned whether the administration's assessment was based on recent polls that showed the American people would support the use of military force in the Gulf to destroy Iraq's nuclear weapons programme.

Sen. Albert Gore said during hearings Thursday that the administration's pronouncements on Iraq's nuclear potential are "clearly misleading, overstating."

"Crying wolf is especially dangerous in the area of nuclear proliferation," said Gore.

Bush answered Gore during a news conference Friday, saying the senator might not be concerned about it.

Congress favourable to Bush initiative

WASHINGTON (AP) — A leaders of Congress have praised President George Bush's offer to negotiate with Iraq over its takeover of Kuwait by sending his top envoy to Baghdad.

On Friday, Bush offered to dispatch U.S. Secretary of State James Baker in a last-ditch diplomatic effort, but said he was ready to wage war "with enough power to get the job done" if the mission fails.

"There will not be any murky ending," Bush declared in a stern warning to Iraq.

Bush also said he has invited Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz for a meeting at the White House in mid-December to discuss the Gulf crisis.

In announcing his diplomatic overture, Bush said the Baker trip and the White House meeting with Aziz were to present the U.S. case directly to Iraq and "demonstrate that we are prepared to go face-to-face and tell (Iraq) how committed we are to the United Nations resolutions."

"It's an opportunity to express face-to-face to Saddam Hussein the commitment of the American people" to Bush's policy to end the occupation of Kuwait, said Thomas S. Foley, speaker of the House of Representatives.

There was no immediate official comment from the Iraqi capital on Bush's offer. But Iraq's ambassador to France, Abdul Razzak Al Hashimi, called Bush's announcement "a very important step toward peace."

He told British radio: "We hope it is going to achieve what we are all striving for, negotiations instead of beating the drums of war. And this is really, I consider it very good news."

In Washington, Senate Democratic leader George Mitchell called the Baker trip "a good idea" and said he felt that it was not necessary to convene Congress for a special session to consider any declaration of war against Iraq.

But Senate Republican Leader Bob Dole, while praising Bush's offer to send Baker to Iraq, accused Congress of wanting "to sit this one out" rather than meeting to adopt a resolution in support.

Congressman Mickey Edwards said Bush argued forcefully at the session against simply waiting for sanctions to work, noting that Kuwait, foreigners in Iraq and economies worldwide continue to suffer with each passing day.

Bush, announcing the decision in a statement from the White House briefing room at the opening of a news conference, said Baker's mission could be held at a "mutually convenient time" between Dec. 15 and Jan. 15.

"It isn't a trip of concession," Bush asserted, even though it reverses his previous opposition to sending emissaries to Iraq.

Bush hailed Thursday's United Nations Security Council vote authorising force and setting a deadline of Jan. 15 for Iraq's troops to leave Kuwait.

"I remain hopeful that we can achieve a peaceful solution to this crisis, but if force is required, we and the other 26 countries who have troops in the area will have enough power to get the job done," he said.

The president added that any such battle "will not be another Vietnam. This will not be a protracted, draw-out war. I pledge to you there will not be any murky ending."

Bush said he would continue to consult with congressional leaders but had no plans to convene a special session of Congress.

Ali delays departure from Iraq

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — American boxing great Mohammad Ali postponed a planned departure from Baghdad with 15 companions Saturday and aides said he was negotiating to have three more released.

The aides said Ali made the move after Friday night's surprise offer by U.S. President George Bush to send Secretary of State James Baker to Baghdad for talks on the Gulf crisis.

The aides gave no other details. Ali and his group had been scheduled to fly to Amman aboard an Iraqi Airways flight.

The aides said Ali's group will seek meetings with senior Iraqi officials and may leave Baghdad Sunday or Monday, depending on the outcome of those meetings.

Ali's manager and spokesman, Jaber Mohammad, said Friday that the 15 Americans had all been held at strategic sites in Iraq.

Ali, a former world heavyweight boxing champion, has been in Baghdad more than a week with two aides and members of the Coalition to Stop U.S. Intervention in the Middle East.

On his self-described mission to win the release of foreign nationals and seeks a peaceful solution to the crisis, Ali met with President Saddam Hussein this week.

Two Norwegians held in Iraq will leave the country Sunday while a third Norwegian aims to go home next day, the Oslo Foreign Ministry said.

Iraqi authorities earlier this week promised that four Norwegians would be permitted to leave Iraq immediately while another five would be allowed to go home before Christmas.

"Two will leave Iraq on Sunday and travel via Moscow. They will be in Oslo on Tuesday morning," Foreign Ministry spokesman Bjorn Blokkhus said.

A group of Japanese led by a

former professional wrestler arrived in Baghdad Saturday hoping to win freedom for up to 30 Japanese.

Japanese diplomatic sources said Upper House Member Antonio Inoki, a retired wrestler, was accompanied by 25 relatives of Japanese held in Iraq.

There are 239 Japanese unable to leave Iraq and 119 of them are being held at key installations.

Saddam has offered to free the 2,000 Western and Japanese over a three-month period starting from Christmas day as a gesture of goodwill.

The Japanese sources said Socialist Party leader Takako Doi was expected to arrive in Baghdad on Dec. 10 at the invitation of First Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yassin Ramadan. She was expected to appeal for the release of more Japanese.

They said former Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone was due to return to Baghdad Dec. 15. Nakasone was in the Iraqi capital last month, when he managed to secure the release of scores of Japanese.

"This is a groundless and grotesque claim which I firmly reject," retorted Carlsson, a Social Democrat.

"Instead of rejoicing in the fact that the Swedes are now home again, Carl Bildt chooses to start a domestic political row," the prime minister told it.

Carlsson's letter was read to the Iraqi National Assembly on Monday before it voted to free the Swedes.

It was published in Sweden for the first time Friday as the 53 Swedish nationals arrived at Stockholm's Arlanda airport.

"Sweden honestly considers that the basic conflict in the region is the Palestinian question and that there can be no durable peace in the region before this problem has been solved," Carlsson said in the letter.

It is the Swedish government's view that it is not only Kuwait which is occupied by foreign troops, there is also the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza and the Israeli and Syrian troops in Lebanon," the letter said.

Opposition Liberal Party leader Bengt Westerberg said it was inappropriate to compare Iraq with Israel and called on Carlsson to clarify Swedish foreign policy.

Although Sweden earlier sharply condemned Iraq's invasion and annexation of Kuwait, the letter does not explicitly do so.

In it, Carlsson said Sweden believed a military solution to the Gulf crisis must be avoided and was prepared to do its utmost to achieve a peaceful settlement on the basis of U.N. resolutions.

He pledged continuing Swedish efforts to secure peace but said this was difficult if its citizens were held against their will in an Arab country.

Neutral Sweden, which is observing the U.N. trade embargo against Iraq, has no military forces in the Gulf.

Pakistan promises 10,000 more troops to Gulf

ISLAMABAD (AP) — Pakistan has agreed to send at least 10,000 more soldiers to join the multinational force in Saudi Arabia, a Foreign Ministry spokesman said Saturday.

The report came two days after the Kuwaiti ambassador said Gulf countries were prepared to give Pakistan a half-billion dollars in aid, although Gulf officials denied the funding was linked to the additional troop deployment.

Representatives of Gulf states have bombarded Pakistan's new prime minister, Nawaz Sharif, with requests for more troops, the government spokesman said on condition he not be identified.

Pakistan promised to send 5,000 soldiers to the kingdom after Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait.

So far only 2,000 have been deployed, although the government official said the remaining 3,000 were expected to leave for Saudi Arabia later this month.

U.S. troops in the Gulf region number about 240,000, and other countries have deployed about 100,000. The forces face an esti-

mated 450,000 Iraqi troops in Kuwait and southern Iraq.

A front-page story in the Nation, an English-language daily newspaper, claimed Saturday that Pakistan would send 10,000 infantry troops to Saudi Arabia by Jan. 15, the U.N.-imposed deadline for the withdrawal of Iraqi soldiers from Kuwait.

The Foreign Ministry spokesman said Pakistan had "agreed in principle" to send at least 10,000 more soldiers, but that the exact number of troops and logistics had yet to be decided.

He said Pakistan had yet to decide whether to also send an armoured division, something Saudi Arabia has repeatedly requested. An armoured division numbers 20,000 troops.

Pakistan, which relied on Kuwait for most of its refined oil products, has been hit hard by the Iraqi invasion and subsequent economic sanctions against Iraq.

This economically troubled country of 110 million people has requested emergency aid particularly from Saudi Arabia.

Alleged drug barons in Pakistan parliament

ISLAMABAD — An alleged drug baron and two men suspected of opium dealing are members of the new parliament, creating speculation that Pakistan's already sluggish anti-drug campaign may founder.

Officials say about 30 tonnes of heroin are shipped from Pakistan every year. Domestic and foreign narcotics officers have criticised successive governments for failing to stop the trade.

"They have not been able to successfully prosecute and imprison what you would call a major" drug figure, a narcotics agent said, on condition of anonymity.

The United States, frustrated by the lack of action, has threatened to cut off more than \$500 million in economic and military aid that already has been frozen because of suspicion that Pakistan is developing nuclear weapons.

Ayub Khan Afridi, said to be one of Pakistan's main drug traffickers, won a National Assembly seat in the Oct. 24 elections. At least two other successful candidates are suspected of large-scale involvement in the opium trade.

A diplomat said, also on condition of anonymity: "We've told them, you have a hand in the National Assembly that everyone recognises are ear-deep in the heroin trade. It's only going to get worse."

"It's the National Assembly that passes the laws, and if criminals are influencing how the law is written, you can pass some pretty ineffective laws."

In 1983, Afridi was convicted in absentia and sentenced to one year in jail after failing to show up in court to answer charges of drug trafficking. Records also show at least five outstanding arrest warrants on similar charges.

Several anti-drug agencies in Pakistan and abroad have sought Afridi's arrest, but with no success. Afridi dismisses the allegations as a baseless slander campaign conducted by former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto during her 20 months in power.

"That's rubbish," said Zahid Sarfraz, interior minister in the caretaker government that replaced Bhutto when she was dismissed in August. Sarfraz, who was in charge of narcotics control, said the drug charges against Afridi had nothing to do with politics.

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's new government created a narcotics ministry and put Rana Chander Singh in charge. Analysts doubt that Singh, a Hindu, will be able to penetrate the orthodox Muslim tribal country where the drug trade is based.

The tribal area, where opium and heroin are produced, is a lawless strip of rough terrain along the border with Afghanistan where Pakistani authorities have little authority.

As one narcotics agent described it: "The tribal area is a sanctuary where they can operate virtually with impunity."

Drug raids and arrests are made periodically, and some are impressive.

In a single raid last month in Baluchistan province, near the border with Afghanistan and Iran, narcotics officials confiscated 1,740 kilograms of heroin with an estimated street value of \$130 million, plus 8,000 kilograms of hashish, semi-automatic rifles, missile launchers and chemicals used to manufacture heroin.

At least one person charged after the raid is a member of the Baluchistan provincial assembly and of the province's governing party.

Such raids are highly publicised, but Pakistani and foreign narcotics officials say only small-time operators and couriers go to jail.

Sarfraz, the former interior minister, found one of the outstanding arrest warrants for Afridi shortly before turning the ministry over to his successor, but could not order the arrest after he left office.

Although a spokesman for the Sharif government said Afridi's arrest was imminent, he apparently is back in the sanctuary of the tribal area.

November records highest emigre rate to Israel

TEL AVIV (R) — A record 30,000 people immigrated to Israel in November, raising the total this year to 164,548, the quasi-governmental Jewish Agency said.

Some 28,000 of the monthly total were from the Soviet Union, making a total of 150,060 Soviet Jews so far this year.

"Palestinians waging the 35-month-long uprising against Israeli rule in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip fear the tidal wave of Jewish immigrants will displace them."

Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir caused a storm of controversy this month when he said Israel should keep the occupied territories for the immigrants.

His rightwing government survived a parliamentary no-confidence vote on his statement Monday. Opposition parties said it put the Soviet exodus in jeopardy.

The United States has pledged guarantees on \$400 million worth of loans on condition the immigrants are not settled in the occupied territories. Israeli officials have said they will not be directed to the occupied territories.

The Jewish Agency said on Nov. 20 that 0.8 per cent of all new immigrants or 1,075 people had settled among some 90,000 Jews in the occupied territories, home to 1.75 million Palestinians.

The flood of immigrants is already taxing resources. Officials expect one million by the end of 1992, swelling Israel's 4.7 million population by a fifth.

Immigration activists fear disaster unless the government treats their absorption as an emergency.

"There are people who first of all live five families in one apartment, and second have to decide each day whether to spend money on the bus and go five or six kilometres or not to buy fish and eat only potatoes," Natan Sharynsky told Israel television.

In October 20,324 Soviet immigrants arrived and in September 18,725.

Among November's immigrants were 428 Ethiopian Jews, Jewish Agency spokesman Yehuda Weinraub said.

Immigration from Ethiopia had virtually stopped since news of a secret airlift of Jews to Israel in 1985 was leaked. The agency now expects Ethiopia to permit its resumption.

Nearly 20,000 Ethiopians are now in Israel and the occupied territories. An equal number await permission to leave Ethiopia, Weinraub said.

Rafsanjani favours temporary marriage

TEHRAN (R) — Single, or widowed Iranians have been told by the country's president they can satisfy their sexual needs by entering into short-term informal marriages.

But President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, while declaring it was wrong to suppress human nature, warned husbands against taking advantage of sexual freedom to have extra-marital affairs.

"Let this way not be taken advantage of by married men to go after their whims and thus destroy family bonds," he said a Friday prayer sermon at Tehran University.

He said marriage contracts could be informally agreed by couples and might only last a month or two.

"If we don't break such cultural barriers then we cannot combat social vices," he said. "If someone has gone crazy due to sexual needs, judgement over this person is very difficult."

Rafsanjani said: "Our youth these days have to wait until they are 25 or 30, to have income and a residence, to satiate their sexual needs. And we all know that kids after 15 have that need."

"There are hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions of widows, divorced women who are left single and because of social norms they remain like that."

Rafsanjani said: "Fighting human nature is incorrect. It will leave behind undesired effects."

Jordan Times Daily Guide and Calendar

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 77311-19

PROGRAMME ONE

15:30 Telenovela

15:30 Koran

15:45 Programme review

15:45 Children programme

17:10 Football

18:10 Local programme

19:50 Programme review

20:00 News in Arabic

20:30 Arabic series

21:30 Programme review

21:45 Local programme

22:00 News summary in Arabic

PROGRAMME TWO

17:30 Le Cinq Derniers Minutes

17:30 News in French

19:15 Classical music

19:30 News summary

19:45 Varieties programme

20:00 News in Arabic

20:30 Open House

21:10 The Secrets of Oil

22:00 News in English

22:30 The Magazine

PRAYER TIMES

04:52 Fajr

06:14 (Sunrise) Dhuha

11:25 Dhukr

14:13 'Asr

16:36 Maghrib

17:58 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swallow, Tel. 810740

Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 637285

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terranova Church Tel. 622366

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541

Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 625843

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 773361

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Assiuta International Church Tel. 685326

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 515817 and 554932

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be partly cloudy and winds will be southerly moderate. In Amman, winds will be northerly moderate and sea calm.

USEFUL NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Mohammed Al Ahsani 778959

Dr. Khalid Eida 671129

Dr. Ahmad Othman 786384

Dr. Salim Al Daboubi 776751

First pharmacy 622520

Ferdous pharmacy 776356

Al Amman pharmacy 637055

Natour pharmacy 626072

Al Salim pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644845

Stemass pharmacy 637460

DEIR:

Dr. Mustafa Al Jabour (—)

Al Shoran pharmacy (985238)

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate:

Reactor 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 891228

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Department 603231

Hotel Complaints 609800

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage

Complaints 897467

Amman Municipality

Complaints 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone

Repairs 623101

Abdullah Telephone Repairs 611101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

HOSPITALS

Water Authority 680100

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power

Company 636381

RJ Flight Information 06-53200

Queen Alia Int. Airport 06-53200

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre 813813/22

Khalid Maternity, J. Amn 644261/6

Akshid Maternity, J. Amn 624412

Jabal Amman Maternity 642662

Malhas, J. Amman 636140

Palestine, Shuqba 664174

Shuqba Hospital 669131

University Hospital 848845

Al-Mashraf Hospital 667271/9

The Islamic, Abdali 666127/37

Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6

Italian, Al-Mashraf 77101/3

Al-Badr, J. Ashrafieh 773111/26

Amry, Marja 891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital 622405/0

Al-Hospital 674155

ZARGA:

Zarga Govt. Hospital (09)983323

Zarga National Hospital (09)991071

Ben Sira Hospital (09)985732

BRID:

Princess Batna Hospital 6272555

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (09)3300-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

09:45 Doha (RJ)

10:00 Jeddah (RJ)

10:30 Cairo (RJ)

10:45 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)

10:55 Bahrain (RJ)

11:00 Cairo (RJ)

11:45 Paris, Rome (RJ)

17:45 Madrid (RJ)

18:00 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)

18:15 Istanbul (RJ)

18:45 Brussels, Geneva (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

11:00 Jeddah (SV)

12:00 Cairo (MS)

12:30 Tripoli (LN)

16:30 Dubai (EK)

19:25 Frankfurt (LH)

20:35 Beirut (ME)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

12:00 Cairo (RJ)

12:30 Tunis, Chambass (RJ)

12:40 London (RJ)

12:45 Istanbul (RJ)

17:15 Amman (RJ)

20:30 Doha (RJ)

20:30 Damascus (RJ)

20:35 Larnaca (RJ)

21:00 Riyadh (RJ)

21:00 Cairo (RJ)

21:45 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)

22:45 Colombo, Bangkok (RJ)

22:50 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)

23:30 Jeddah, Sana'a (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

12:40 Jeddah (SV)

14:00 Cairo (MS)

14:30 Tripoli (LN)

15:30 Dubai (EK)

MARKET PRICES

Upstower price in fils per kg.

Apple 600 / 500

Banana 500 / 450

Banana (Malakana) 450 / 400

Bone 200 / 140

Cabbage 120 / 80

Carrot 240 / 180

Cauliflower 140 / 100

Corn 200 / 150

Cucumbers (large) 150 / 80

Cucumbers (small) 320 / 280

Dates 500 / 400

Eggplant 180 / 150

Egg 300 / 250

Garlic 1400 / 1000

Grape 600 / 500

Lemon 170 / 120

Mallow 180 / 120

Marrow (large) 100 / 50

Marrow (small) 220 / 180

Onion (dry) 240 / 200

Onion (wet) 220 / 180

Okra 600 / 500

Orange 340 / 280

Potato (new) 220 / 180

Pepper (green) 120 / 80

Potato (old) 300 / 250

Radish 200 / 150

Sage 650 / 500

Spinach 150 / 100

Tomatoes 170 / 120

NEW YORK (Petra) — Jordan has urged the United Nations to implement Security Council resolutions on Palestine, issued since the Arab-Israeli war of 1967, and said that implementation of these resolutions could be carried out through an international peace conference in which all concerned parties can take part.

"International legitimacy can not be selective and is by no means divisible, and the U.N. Security Council possesses the machinery for implementing its own resolutions so as to bring peace to the Middle East," urged Jordan's Ambassador to the United Nations Abdullah Salah.

"The Security Council has so

far failed to implement its own resolutions due to Israel's rejection of these resolutions on the one hand and to the negative stand on the part of one of its five member nations on the other," Salah told the U.N. General Assembly meeting Friday evening.

He said that the most recent instance was represented by the Israeli massacre of 20 Arabs in Jerusalem which prompted the council to issue a resolution condemning the barbaric act and to decide to send an inquiry mission to investigate, but "the resolution was not implemented for the aforementioned reasons."

"The Palestine question is not a question of human rights and

refugees alone, but rather it is a political issue of the first degree and its essential component is the national and legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including their right to self-determination in an independent state in Palestine," Salah pointed out.

Israel, he said, has been denying the Palestinians their basic rights which were endorsed by the world community through the Security Council, and the Palestinians have risen in an uprising to try to gain their freedom and their basic rights.

"The uprising, which is now entering its fourth year, is not a mere expression of despair and frustration, but rather the birth of

a state and a project for genuine peace," Salah said. He said that Israel had refused the Palestinian Liberation Organisation's offers for peace declared by Palestinian President Yasser Arafat in 1988, and had been defying the world community's will by refusing to give the Palestinians their basic rights.

"Israel has exploited the cold war pursuing its colonial and expansionist projects in the occupied West Bank and has built settlements on Arab territory," Salah added. He said that Palestinians were now assuming the role of liberating their lands by themselves, through the intifada, which would continue until peace was achieved.

AMMAN (J.T.)—In its drive to make water resources available for agricultural purposes the Ministry of Water and Irrigation plans to set up three new dams in the coming three years, starting next month, and will duly announce tenders for the projects, according to Minister of Water and Irrigation Daoud Khalaf.

In a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, he said that one of the dams, to be called Wadi Rajel Dam at Azraq, will have a storage capacity of 2.5 million cubic metres of water.

The other, Wadi Swaqa Dam near Karak, will have the storage capacity of 1.5 million cubic metres, and the third, Wadi Jaradan Dam should store up to 500,000 cubic metres.

"The ministry started work on five dams in the past few years in order to collect flood water for farming and livestock in the semi arid regions of the country," Khalaf pointed out. He said that these are: Bweida Dam near Ramtha (700,000 cubic metres), Sama Al Sarhan Dam near Mafraq (1.7 million cubic metres),

Ghadeer Abiad Dam near Mafraq (700,000 cubic metres), Qatraneh Dam near Karak (two million cubic metres), Sultani Dam near Karak (1.2 million cubic metres).

In cooperation with the Armed Forces, the ministry last year completed work on several other dams which have a total storage capacity exceeding two million cubic metres of water.

Last month the minister said that feasibility studies on two dams, on the Waleh River and the Wadi Mujib River in southern

Jordan, were nearing completion. Those dams would cost JD 70 million are expected to store up to 55 million cubic metres of water annually.

Prime Minister Mudar Badran last May instructed Khalaf to build 10 earth dams in the Kingdom in the coming year which is to be named the year of water for Jordan.

He also instructed the Ministry of Water and Irrigation to put an end to the pollution of the environment and underground water resources in the country.

ADMAN (J.T.) — On November 25 Friedrich Naumann Foundation of Germany handed over the "Cooperative Development Support Communication Programme" to its partner, the Jordan Cooperative Organisation (JCO).

With this transfer of ownership, JCO has become the only cooperative organisation in the developing world, owning a complete video-production-centre, equipped with both 16 mm and 35 mm cameras, editing and sound-track recording and mixing equipment as well as a distribution technology, comprising a mobile video-cinema, 15 viewing units and a carpark of three buses, furnished with all audiovisual teaching and training materials. This besides of a software-stock of 61 produced videofilms and slideshows, all in the Arabic (with some in English) language and focusing on cooperative and agricultural information and development. Hard and software together form an asset, valuing about \$1 million.

with video-viewing units, video libraries and sets of educational books on cooperative science and agriculture. Many thousands of cooperative members are using these facilities for their personal enlightenment.

As a result of these extension services, new cooperative societies were formed, including also six cooperative societies for women in the south of Jordan.

"It was and is the conviction of UNRWA and its Development Support and Communication Programme that change and development start in the minds of people, and that in this process inter-institutional cooperation plays an important role," officials say. In compliance with this, some video-films were created and produced together with experts of other developmental agencies, the Jordanian universities and the Ministry of Agriculture. All films were distributed free of charge to many Jordanian organisations as well as to other Arab cooperative and educational institutions.

By Serene Halassa
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Under the motto of "Food and Medicine — the Right of Every Human Being," a peace ship carrying powdered milk and medicine will sail from Algiers to Iraq around the fifth of December. The ship will also carry a group of women volunteers, representing women federations around the Arab World.

According to sources at the Women's Federation in Jordan, the idea was prompted by several women federations during a meeting held in Sana'a between 12-14 of Sept. 1990. The women federations who organised the project are from Palestine, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Algeria, Tunisia, Yemen, Mauritania, and Somalia.

The ship will sail from Algeria, passing by Tunisia, through the Suez Canal, the Red Sea, the Arabian Sea, the Persian Gulf and finally reaching its destination.

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tion, Iraq. The trip will take approximately fifteen days. "If for any reason the course is changed and the ship is forced to take another route, around the African continent, then the ship will take two months to get to Iraq," the source, who refused to be named told the Jordan Times.

Answering a question on whether the ship will have to pay any tax when it crosses the Suez Canal, the source said: "We were told that we have to pay the Egyptian government \$150,000 for letting us pass through the canal."

"We are acting upon a direct request from women federations in the Arab World who started this project," the source said. The source also added that six invitations were extended to volunteers to make the trip as an act of solidarity with the people of Iraq. "We are still reviewing and studying who will join the ship on its trip to Iraq," the source added.

AMMAN (Petra) — Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Al Lawzi Saturday received a two-member British parliamentary delegation, representing the Conservative Party and the Labour Party.

Lawzi reviewed with the delegation the history of the Jordanian-British relations.

Referring to Middle East problems and Israel's repressive measures in the occupied Arab territories, Lawzi stressed that these issues needed dialogue based on facts and consultations.

He said Jordan would maintain its responsibility towards peace despite all changes in the region and will adhere to peace, human rights and international legitimacy.

Linking the Palestinian issue with the Gulf crisis will help

Abiyat ritish ntarians

establish the right basis for real peace in the region, he said. The stage in the region is set for real peace in spite of all the current crises, he said, hoping that co-existence and understanding replace destruction.

The delegation was also received by Lower House of Parliament Speaker Abdul Latif Arabyat.

Arabyat affirmed to the delegation the cohesiveness among Jordan's leadership, its government and people. He said Jordan was looking forward to achieving justice and human rights for all peoples of the world.

Senate committee

His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Saturday receives Romanian and Jordanian delegations for trade talks (Petra photo)

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan met at the royal court Saturday with the Romanian side to the Jordanian-Romanian joint economic committee led by Dumitru Popescu and called for further development of Jordanian-Romanian cooperation in political and economic fields.

The Crown Prince briefed the Romanian delegation on Jordan's position vis-a-vis the Gulf crisis and its ongoing efforts to solve the issue by peaceful means and in accordance with the international legitimacy.

Developments in the Gulf, the Prince said, led to a sharp rise in oil prices that brought about disastrous consequences to poor nations and made the rich richer.

cooperation in trade and economic fields.

A statement at the conclusion of the talks said that Romania will import 65,000 tonnes of Jordanian phosphate from now until the end of 1990 in implementation of a deal signed in October 1990 between the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company (JPMC) and the Romanian importing company.

According to that deal, Romania will import 200,000 tonnes of phosphate from now until the end of February 1991 and 400,000 tonnes during 1991.

The two sides agreed to create trade centres in Bucharest and Amman to sell national products directly to the public, according to the statement issued at the

cultural and scientific matters, but also in questions relating to scholarships offered by Romania to Jordanian students, the statement pointed out.

The two sides agreed to encourage investment in either country; and in this respect, the two sides initialled a formal agreement which will be signed within three months. The two sides agreed to hold the committee's next meeting in Bucharest in the last quarter of the coming year.

The minutes were signed by Minister of Planning Khaleel Amin Abdullah and the head of the Romanian delegation Dumitru Popescu.

Opinion poll

AMMAN (J.T.) — An opinion poll centre operating through the Arab Press Agency for Press and Publication has been opened in Jordan.

The centre, the first of its kind in the country, conducts analysis of events and developments related to the Gulf issue trying to sound out Jordanian people's views on the situation and questions related to peace or war in the region, visits to the region, like that carried out recently by President Bush, consequences of the region in case of a war with Iraq, and other related topics.

The new centre invited the local and foreign media and representatives of various embassies and Arab and foreign organisations to benefit from its services.

It said that a group of experts and consultants representing various Sectors were being involved in the analytical and statistical processes conducted by the centre which is operated by Samir Hiyari, a journalist who is employed by Al Ra'i and the Jordan Times.

AMMAN (J.T.) — "World AIDS Day 1990" was observed here Saturday by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) which organised a day-long programme of discussions with specialists designed to warn the public about the dangers inherent in the killer disease AIDS.

Director of the UNESCO office in Amman Mohammad Kazem reminded the audience at the opening meeting the results of the studies revealed to Arab health ministers in Damascus recently which disclosed that the number of AIDS victims was on the increase in the Arab region and in Asia.

He said that UNESCO in cooperation with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) had prepared an international programme designed to spread awareness about the disease; this programme serves as an essential strategy to be adopted by countries against the spread of the disease.

Zubeir Zakariya, director of Students Affairs at the Ministry

World AIDS Day

victims rising programmes

of Education, told the meeting about the ministry's efforts over the past two years to spread awareness in schools about the killer disease.

He said that 33 per cent of the school graduates could be exposed to the disease because they travel abroad for studies and that the ministry had been active over the past two years in distributing leaflets, showing documentary films and holding meetings with students to spread awareness.

"World AIDS Day has a special place in the history of the AIDS pandemic since 1988. December 1 has been a day of offering messages of compassion, hope, solidarity and understanding about AIDS to every country in the world, north and south, east and west," said a statement issued by UNESCO Saturday.

It said that World AIDS Day emerged from a call, by the world summit of ministers of health on programmes for AIDS prevention in January 1988, to open channels of communication, strengthen the exchange of information and expertise and

g;
prepared

forge a spirit of social tolerance.

The statement noted that since that meeting, World AIDS Day had received the support of the World Health Assembly, the United Nations Organisation, governments, communities and individuals around the world.

The statement said that World AIDS Day was part of the global effort to meet the challenge of AIDS, an epidemic that continues to worsen in all regions of the world.

The statement estimated that by the mid-1990s about 250,000 cases of AIDS had been reported to WHO from over 150 countries, but WHO estimates that there had actually been about 700,000 cases per day.

According to the statement, World AIDS Day 1990 has a message that emphasises determination to continue to increase awareness about AIDS, strengthen the worldwide effort to stop the spread of disease by highlighting the impact on women, support the strengthening of AIDS prevention and control activities, and promote support and care for AIDS-infected persons.

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

★ **Exhibition of 39 paintings by Iraqi artist Halmat Muhammad Ali at Abdul Hammed Shouman Foundation Gallery (10 a.m. - 5 p.m.)**

★ **Exhibition of British archaeological projects in Jordan at the Royal Cultural Centre.**

King cables Ilescu, Ben Sultan

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein Saturday sent a cable of good wishes to Romanian President Ion Ilescu on his country's national day. The King wished the president continued health and happiness and the Romanian people further progress and prosperity. The King also cabled President of the United Arab Emirates Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan on his country's national day wishing the UAE continued progress.

28 run for chamber board

AMMAN (Petra) — A total of 28 candidates are vying for seats in the 12-seat board of the Amman Chamber of Commerce which will hold elections Monday. The candidates are grouped in four different blocs in addition to five independents, according to Islam Al Khatib, head of the election committee.

Jumaa, Edris exhibit at Yarmouk

IRBID (Petra) — Jordanian artists Mahmoud Assad Jumaa, and Edris Jarrah opened a plastic arts exhibition at Yarmouk University Saturday, displaying 40 paintings. These depict daily life in Jordan, the national heritage and Arab culture.

AMMAN (Petra)—The Foreign Affairs Committee at the Upper House of Parliament Saturday discussed various aspects of Jordan's position vis-a-vis the Gulf crisis and the latest political developments on that issue in the light of the American initiative to open dialogue with Iraq.

The committee's rapporteur Hamad Al Farhan said that the committee was concerned over the hardened position of the United States with regard to the issue which could lead to aggression on Iraq. Deputy Prime Minister Salem Maysanah and Foreign Minister Marwan Al Qasem attended the meeting chaired by Ahmad Al Lawzi.

'Has the U.S.-led coalition blinked?'

(Continued from page 4)

Question: Now that you have a clearcut U.N. resolution on use of force, doesn't that force you into a position — if these talks between the secretary of state break down — doesn't this force you into the position of having to use force on Jan. 15 if Saddam Hussein hasn't left? And if not, won't we be seen as the one that blinked first?

Answer: No, the date was not a date at which point force had to be used.

Q: If I could just follow up with another question. Are you going to ask Congress for approval of this — this resolution? Would you like to see Congress pass the same kind of resolution as the United Nations?

A: I'd love to see Congress pass a resolution enthusiastically endorsing what the United Nations has done, yes. But we're in consultation on that, and I have no plan to call a special session. But we will continue our consultations. They'll follow, incidentally, today, this meeting with the leadership. So I'll get a little better feel for that as we go along.

Q: You say you're confident that American troops will prevail against Saddam if called upon.

A: Oh, absolutely.

Q: But at what price? How many Americans?

A: Well, I can't give you that, any figures, of course. But I can say that the movement of this additional force safeguards the lives of every American and everyone of our allies in the Gulf.

Q: In recent days, senior members of the administration have emphatically rejected the idea of any special emissaries or diplomatic envoys to or from Iraq to discuss this on your part. What changed your mind, sir?

A: The U.N. resolution, I think, has a good chance of making Saddam Hussein understand what it is he's up against. I have not felt that he got the message. I hope this will do it. But I am convinced that these two direct meetings that I've discussed here will guarantee to all the people of the world, certainly to the American people, that Saddam Hussein is not misunderstanding, not misinterpreting, I keep hearing "well, people won't give him the news." Unlike the president of the United States, who gets good news and bad news very faithfully, I am told that Saddam Hussein's troops don't bring him the bad news. And I'm told that he is somewhat isolated. And I think this U.N. resolution will help in a sense to de-isolate him. And I think the two proposals that I've made here will help. And so, it's just going the extra step, that's what it is. And it's a decision that I personally made.

Q: You indicate that this date is not actually a deadline for the use of force, merely a date after which force would be permissible. How do you avoid the impression, should that date come and go without military action, that the U.S.-led coalition has, in fact, blinked?

A: Well, we've got to look at events at the time. But I don't think there will ever be a perception that the United States is going to blink in this situation. That's why I had some of the words in this statement that I had.

Q: You've just spoken about the weapons of mass destruction

and nuclear weapons, and also that one of your goals is to try to reach stability in the region. Can you reach stability in the region with Saddam Hussein in power?

A: I think most countries — members of the United Nations — feel that there have to be some safeguards put into effect in terms of guaranteeing the security and stability of the Gulf. And so, I would think that the status quo ante will not be enough, and I think there will be — there are sanctions in place now, and I think it would be very proper to discuss what those safeguards should be after there has been a — total compliance with the United Nations resolutions.

Q: I just noticed that when you were originally — when you outlined your goals you included stability in the region you seemed to summarize them when you talk about these talks with Saddam Hussein, but you didn't — you only mentioned the first three; you didn't mention stability in the region.

A: Well, I was talking about the U.N. resolutions — which security and stability I don't think was a part of the U.N. resolution. It is certainly part of the world's objective, however, I think that may be the technical difference.

Q: But look, it is critical, and it is very, very important.

Q: Do you take it from that communication that you've received there that the Iraqis have the message and want to eliminate that as a potential tripping?

A: I don't know. It's too — it's the best question, right on target, one that we were discussing inside. And I — let's try to be optimistic and say this — this could be a positive sign. But it's so far short of compliance with international law that I can't be rejoicing. But it is a very interesting development.

Q: Let me ask you something else. Al Gore yesterday takes issue with your comments and the comments of some of your aides, such as Brent Scowcroft, about Saddam being able to churn out a nuclear weapon within a matter of months. Gore, who's had some private briefings apparently from some of these people, indicates that your administration's statements are misleading.

A: I disagree with the senator, and if he wants to gamble on the future about the construction of atomic weapons by Saddam Hussein, I don't. And I know what the intelligence says, every bit of it. And I can't share it, obviously, because we don't comment on intelligence matters. But I am concerned, and the very first time I spoke on this subject, I think in August, I mentioned weapons of mass destruction, I believe, but certainly early on. And I am concerned about it. And if Senator Gore has a difference of opinion and is not concerned about it, we just have an honest difference there.

Q: I am concerned about Saddam Hussein's attempt to accelerate the possession of a — construction or possession of a nuclear weapon, and I might as well share that as honesty as I can.

Q: Are you saying you think he could develop a warhead next year?

A: I'm not giving you a time frame, but there — you've seen the estimates, some of which, I guess, are accurate, in the papers. And there's a lot of scientists that come down on different sides. And Senator Gore, I'm sure, is

an intelligent fellow, and he — but I don't think he has access to absolutely all — maybe he does — but I am not going to err on the side of underestimation when it comes to this question.

Q: Your announcement about Tareq Aziz and Secretary Baker — have you had any signals, any indications from the Iraqis, that they would welcome this, that they are indeed looking for this kind of communication?

A: No. The only thing I've heard is that they want to talk. There's an opportunity, but no, I have not had any — even diplomatic signals or signals of other kinds.

Q: And of those 26 nations that you list in the area, how many of those are equally committed to offensive action, rather than just defensive action?

A: I can't give you the answer to that because I don't really know. But I expect that there is enthusiasm in all quarters of those countries for the U.N. action that was taken yesterday.

Q: With all respect, shouldn't you know how many would follow your troops into battle?

A: I know that what I said is true about the — if we have to go into battle, and I am satisfied I know enough about that. I went over in detail, as one will imagine a president should because I have the responsibility as Commander-in-Chief, what might happen if we have to use force. I repeat, I hope we'll never have to have one single shot fired in anger.

Q: Iraq has been constantly calling for dialogue. Aren't you concerned that those two missions, Tareq Aziz and James Baker, will lead Saddam Hussein to claim that the United States is showing a sign of weakness?

A: That what?

Q: That the United States is weakening?

A: Because Baker goes to Baghdad?

Q: Aren't you concerned that that would be the position of Saddam Hussein?

A: No, I'm not. I'm concerned some might say this is an ultimatum in which it is an effort to be sure that he understands the commitment of the United States, that he understands that anything that is done must be done inside the confines of the U.N. resolutions that have been passed, that there will be no face saving. That's not what this is about. This is to be sure that he understands how strongly the president of the United States feels about implementing a treaty, without concessions — the U.N. position.

Q: And some have told me that he's not getting the message of how determined we are. And I can't think of any better way to do it at this juncture, in the wake of the U.N. resolution, than this face-to-face meeting. I'm not sure he'll agree to it.

Q: Arab experts suggest that Saddam Hussein has hinted in his remarks that he would like to have some sort of deal, but he wouldn't necessarily hold to his demands. Now you're saying you're willing to meet with him. Are you willing to offer him anything in these meetings in return for a pullout, such as a conference on the Middle East?

A: No. Those two items are totally separate. We've made that very, very clear. And what I have said is that this will be — this — these discussions will be done within the U.N. mandate. I'm not

all that hopeful that what — that we'll get big results out of all of this. It's going the extra mile; it's taking the extra step. But I can't tell you that I think we're going to have great success on all of this because our partnership in the world is together on the fact that we cannot stop short of total fulfillment without condition of the U.N. resolutions.

Q: Well, what then is the point of the meeting? Are you just delivering ultimatums?

Q: No, this isn't an ultimatum, at all. And I hope what it does is demonstrate that we are prepared to go face to face and tell him how committed we are to the U.N. resolutions. I've told you, I don't think he has felt this commitment. As I said earlier, he may feel it a little more strongly now that we did what many sceptics thought couldn't happen — that the U.N. Security Council did — and that is come together and pass this very important resolution.

Q: So one thing is, we got to — he's got to understand what the alternatives are to complying with the U.N. resolution. And the best way to get that across is one on one — Baker looking him right in the eye. I've been told that he doesn't necessarily believe that I am totally committed to what I've been saying, and here's a good opportunity to have him understand that, face to face.

Q: So we want to make the case to him, directly, for complying with the U.N. resolutions; make the case to him, from a secretary of state who's incessantly worked to get this resolution through, of the strength of the commitment of the international community. And then try to persuade him that — to reconsider his position and to take the steps necessary for a peaceful resolution of the crisis.

Q: But it isn't, you know, a trip of concession. When you've done what he's done, I don't — I don't see that there's — there's room for concession, there's room for giving something to save face. That's not the way you treat with aggression and we're not going to treat it any differently than I've outlined here.

Q: You mentioned the damage that high oil prices are doing to the world economy. Should Saudi Arabia and other producers share more of their windfall?

A: I think they're doing a pretty good job in underwriting the costs to various countries and helping third — third party countries that have been hurt by all of this. But I think everybody should go the extra mile to help others.

Q: And I was pleased when I was talking in Mexico, for example with President Salinas, that he is selling oil at — trying to help the burden by selling oil at bargain prices off of this inflated world price. So I think everybody should try to help. And I think the Saudis have made a lot of commitments to countries in trying to help out, and I hope they'll continue to do that, and I'm confident they will.

Q: If I could follow, sir, should Saudi Arabia have a military draft?

A: That's for the Saudi Arabians to decide. I don't think the United States needs one, incidentally.

Q: If you ultimately feel that you have to ask Americans to support the use of force, what that, of course, means is that you

have to ask some parents to give up the lives of their children.

A: I know it.

Q: And what I was wondering was, we all know how important your children are to you. Do you feel that this issue is important enough to you that you could conceive of giving up one of their lives for it?

A: You know, you've put your finger on a very difficult question. People say to me, "How many lives, how many lives can you expend?" Each one is precious. And I don't want to reminisce, but I've been there. I know what it's like to have fallen comrades and see young kids die in battle.

Q: And it's only the president that should be asked to make the decision: Is it worth it? How many lives is it worth? Is it worth it to commit one life, put one life in harm's way to achieve these objectives? And that's why I want to get a peaceful resolution to this

question.

You ought to read my mail. It is so heart moving. Supportive, and yet, "please bring my kid home. Please bring my husband home." And it's a tough question, but the president has to make the right decision, and these are worldwide principles of moral importance. And I will do my level best to bring those kids home without one single shot fired in anger. And if a shot is fired in anger, I want to guarantee each person that their kid whose life is in harm's way will have the maximum support, will have the best chance to come home alive, and will be backed up to the hilt.

Q: And that's why — because of that question that weighs on my mind, I added that language this morning about how this will not be a Vietnam. They can criticise me for moving force, and if we've got

one kid that's apt to be in harm's way, I want him backed up to the hilt by American firepower and others as well. And that's why I'm working as hard as I am, not only to hold this coalition together, but to strengthen it. And the best way to safeguard the lives of Americans is for Saddam Hussein to do that which he should have done long ago. And if force has to be used, the best way to safeguard lives is to see that you've got the best and you're willing to use it. And that's my posture.

Q: Well, sir, you seem to give — you and Jim Baker give the other countries a chance to talk, and you give the United Nations a chance to talk, but you won't give the United States people a chance to debate with you.

Q: Is there a question in there somewhere?

A: Well, now, that's an absurd

comment, from a bright person like you. That is absolutely absurd. They're holding hearings. They're talking. They have the power under the adjournment resolution to reconvene this minute. Some in the House want to come back now. Some want to talk about it later on. Some in the Senate want to come right back now and immediately endorse what the president has done and what the Security Council resolution is, and I'm for that. But some don't. And so consultation is going on. Please do not assign to me improper motives. We're — they're talking right now. They're having endless hearings by endless experts up there, each one with a slightly different view. And that's the American way. And that's fine. And I know what the responsibilities of the president are, and I am fulfilling those responsibilities. (USIS).

Baker to Baghdad: Bush taps deal-maker for tough role

By Carol Giacomo
Reuter

WASHINGTON — The man President George Bush wants to send to Baghdad to look Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein "right in the eye" is a shrewd tactician who believes in the art of the deal.

Secretary of State James Baker has held some of the toughest jobs in Washington, where horse-trading is a way of life.

Now Bush feels that he should negotiate directly with the wily and tough Iraqi leader, "looking him right in the eye" without blinking.

Baker, a 60-year-old millionaire from Bush's adopted home state of Texas, has been a close friend and political associate of the president for 30 years.

He served as treasury secretary and as a senior White House aide

under former President Ronald Reagan and ran Bush's presidential election campaign in 1988.

His handling of Saddam could mean the difference between war and peace and profoundly affect Bush's political future.

Baker, who is often called "Mr. cautious," assumed a low profile in the days following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on Aug. 2. This led to speculation that he did not fully support Bush's strategy of despatching thousands of troops to the Gulf to deter Iraq from further aggression.

But he has gradually emerged into the limelight as the guiding force behind Washington's Gulf policy.

Tireless diplomacy by Baker succeeded in building up international support for a critical U.N. Security Council resolution authorising force against Iraq if it

fails to withdraw its troops from Kuwait by Jan. 15.

The resolution was adopted 12 to 2 with one abstention on Thursday after Baker had undertaken a high-profile odyssey around the globe, meeting each of the council's 15 foreign ministers.

Armed with the U.N. vote, Bush offered on Friday to "go the extra mile" by holding direct talks with Iraq to try to prevent an increasingly likely war.

In a televised statement, he offered to send Baker to Baghdad to meet Saddam in the second week of December.

"He's got to understand what the alternatives are to comply with the United Nations resolution. And the best way to get that across is one-on-one, Baker looking him right in the eye," Bush said. He also invited Iraqi Foreign

Minister Tariq Aziz to Washington for talks in the White House.

Like Bush, Baker is known as a moderate, pragmatic Republican who is driven more by political instinct than ideology.

He has no specific background in foreign policy, but has generally received high marks as secretary of state.

Analysts note his skillful handling of German unification and his establishment of closer ties with the Soviet Union.

But Baker has been criticised for allowing the close relations the United States has with Israel to deteriorate and for poor handling of the run-up to the Gulf crisis.

Critics fault him for not taking Iraq's build-up of troops on the Kuwaiti border seriously enough before the invasion.

Crown Prince

(Continued from page 1)

we have stood for since Aug. 2 and indeed before Aug. 2."

"We have always believed in a negotiated settlement at least between two Arab countries," he said. "So, I hope that if in some small way we represent a peace lobby, that we have some effect in this statement by the president which this country welcomes."

The Crown Prince also expressed hope that moves to resolve the Gulf crisis would evolve into concrete measures to ensure security of the region. "I think that the possibility of a conference on security and cooperation in the Middle East region is invited by the Gulf crisis and when the U.S. speaks of institutional deterrence or security structures, my hope is that it is not a reference to a military presence or militarising of the region," he said. "God knows we have enough of that as it is."

What is needed, he said is "a process of three root-maps: A political root-map, an economic root-map, given the inequalities that exist in the region, and a weapons-of-mass-destruction root-map where diplomatic and political pressure is brought to bear upon all in the region to drastically reduce military expenditure."

In his interview with CNN, the Crown Prince expressed concern

that Security Council Resolution 678, which was adopted Thursday, endorsing the use of force against Iraq appeared to be loose-knit. "There is in that resolution no point of reference in the Security Council yet as to how troops effectively would function; there is no reference to the Military Staff Committee (of the U.N.) which should be a (coordinator), representing the permanent five (members of the Security Council); there is no unified command as such," he pointed out.

Following are some of the questions and answers from the Crown Prince's interview with CNN:

Question: I understand that President Bush has been (on the phone) with the Saudis and King Fahd today and President (Hosni) Mubarak (of Egypt) has been also on the phone with King Fahd. What do you think the Arab World is saying?

Answer: I think that they are looking into this last chance resolution and indeed now the president's invitation and trying to define what the collective position of the alliance will be. As you recall 12 other countries supported the military build-up in the region. However, there are nine Arab countries which have not opted for the military option and the military build-up. I would hope they will be discussing how best to heal the wounds in Arab

lands. God forbid that war took place, particularly Arab against Arab and Muslims against Muslims, the wounds would be very deep. So I would imagine one scenario is that they may be looking at the origins of the disputes.

Q: As you know, we have talked recently with your brother His Majesty King Hussein. He has shed some light on what has been going on a little more specifically between Jordan and Iraq, and suggested that Arab discussion had been going on within the Arab community and that he may again travel to Baghdad sometime soon. If he does, do you think His Majesty will talk President Saddam to accept the deal?

A: We have from the beginning insisted on international legitimacy and our discussion with Iraq very clear as far as accepting the deal. There is no deal struck yet. It is basically unconditional withdrawal from Kuwait and the restoration of the emir which conforms with other positions. However, if the deal is Resolution 660 I remind again of paragraph 3 which calls for direct negotiations between Iraq and Kuwait. So it is not a question of Iraqi acceptance but it is also a question of Arab acceptance. That means Saudi Arabia, Egypt and the other Arab members of the alliance.

Bush

(Continued from page 1)

Gulf." Tucker writes in the New Republic magazine.

Public approval of Bush's handling of the crisis, as measured by polls, has shrunk from the 75 per cent to 85 per cent range in the days after Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait, to the 51-57 per cent range now.

Iraq

(Continued from page 1)

Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford. "This act today fills me with foreboding," he said in an interview on ABC television's "Nightline" programme.

Kissinger said in the interview that it might be impossible to prevent other members of the international coalition who have sent troops to the region from starting their own negotiations with Iraq.

He said the United States could lose its military option after winning United Nations support for the use of force against Iraq.

If a compromise was struck with Iraq then "not only is aggression rewarded but 400,000 Americans have appeared in an area and have left again without having achieved something that might have been achieved without such a huge display of military force," he said.

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Agassi survives near-upset, beats Australian in Davis Cup finals

ST. PETERSBURG, Florida (AP) — A Tasmanian with a big serve gave Andre Agassi a devil of time in the Davis Cup finals, but the American blamed a virus for his near-upset.

Agassi twice rallied from a set down to beat Richard Fromberg 4-6, 6-2, 4-6, 6-2, 6-4, Michael Chang then swept Darren Cahill 6-2, 7-6, 7-4, 6-0 as the heavily favoured United States took a 2-0 lead over Australia.

The United States can clinch the best-of-five event Saturday if the doubles team of Rick Leach and Jim Pugh beats Pat Cash and John Fitzgerald.

Agassi, ranked fourth in the world, said a "horrible virus" — previously undisclosed — kept him from eating from Sunday through Tuesday and affected his game.

"There's no question the virus has taken a toll on me," he said. "I was tired. I was much weaker than I ever thought I would be."

In the fifth set, Fromberg won back-to-back games at love to close the margin to 5-4, but Agassi took the final game on his third match point with a forehand winner.

Agassi said he had considered giving up his spot on the team in favour of Aaron Krickstein, but decided Thursday that he felt well enough to play.

"If I could go back in time, I think Aaron should be playing," he said.

Fromberg said he was not aware beforehand that Agassi had been ill.

"And I wouldn't have ever thought he was sick during the match, either," Fromberg said. "It's a lot of rubbish, really. Whenever he plays players that aren't ranked as high as him, he tries to put them down. I felt it was a very close match and it could have gone either way."

With the finals in the United States for the first time since 1981, a crowd of about 17,000 was passive by Davis Cup standards. There was little chanting or flag-waving and the fans rarely cheered mistakes by Fromberg or



Andre Agassi in action

Cahill. The 20-year-old Fromberg, Australia's best clay-court player and highest-ranked pro at no. 32, was making his Davis Cup debut. He showed no indication of being nervous, and when in a jam he would often bail himself out with a big serve.

"I anticipated being a little more in control," Agassi said. "I think he played a hell of a match."

On a clay court in the Suncoast Dome, each player hugged the baseline. Agassi may have felt weak, but he played his best tennis in the latter stages on the 3½-hour match.

As a tirade Fromberg struggled to get his first serve in, Agassi broke twice in a row to win the

fourth set easily. The American, pounding his groundstrokes with more confidence than early in the match, broke again in the first and fifth games of the final set. "I had to dig a little deep to pull it out," Agassi said. "She did look more tired than me."

Fromberg took the early lead with a combination of aces and a big forehand that often pinned Agassi in his backhand corner. Agassi looked tentative initially, and his strategic moves sometimes backfired. He netted several attempted drop shots; when he decided to come to the net for only the second time in the match, he netted a forehand volley for the final point of the first set.

Chang played steady tennis — 19 per cent of his first serves were

good — and he dodged a set point in the second set to sweep Cahill and set up the possibility of a U.S. sweep.

"It'd be nice to be able to close this out in three (matches)," Chang said. "Otherwise I'm going to lose another night of sleep going into the final day."

The last time a team overcame a 2-0 deficit to win the Davis Cup finals was in 1939, when Australia beat the United States.

"We've got a job in front of us," Australian captain Neale Fraser said.

Agassi to play in Grand Slam Cup ST. PETERSBURG, Florida (AP) — Agassi, facing a possible suspension for withdrawing from next month's Grand Slam Cup in Munich, said Friday he has reversed his decision and will play in the \$6-million tournament.

The International Tennis Federation (ITF), upset that Agassi was reneging on a commitment to play in the cup, had threatened to suspend him from one or more Grand Slam tournaments next year.

"After seeing that they were going to really go to the wall as far as suspending me from the Grand Slam tournaments and fining me, that made me realise it was a much bigger issue than Andre Agassi pulling out of a special event," he said.

Agassi made the comments after beating Australia's Richard Fromberg in the first round of the Davis Cup finals. He said he notified the ITF of his decision Thursday.

Agassi had pulled out of the Grand Slam in support of the ATP tour. The cup is in competition as a premier season-ending event with the ATP Tour's World Championship, which Agassi won last week.

Agassi said he reversed his decision because he was threatened with lawsuits over his withdrawal. He declined to elaborate.

Any money he wins in the tournament will be donated to charity, he said.

NBA ROUNDUP

Celtics 123, Bullets 95

BOSTON (AP) — Larry Bird became the 15th National Basketball Association player in history to pass the 20,000-point milestone and the Boston Celtics stretched their winning streak to eight games with a 123-95 victory over the Washington Bullets Friday night.

Bird's historic basket came with 3:40 gone in the third quarter when he sank a fall-away jumper from the foul line, giving him 13 points for the game and 20,001 for his career. He finished with 21 points for a total of 20,009 in his 12-year career.

Bird joins Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, John Havlicek, Oscar Robertson and Jerry West as the only players with both 20,000 points and 5,000 assists. George Gervin is 14th in scoring with 20,708 points.

Leading 96-84, Boston broke the game open with a 13-0 run, started by Bird's third 3-pointer of the game with 7:22 left.

Washington was led by Bernard King with 22 points and Harvey Grant with 21.

Pistons 96, Uyers 94

AUBURN HILLS, Michigan (AP) — Joe Dumars scored 16 of his 24 points in the second half as Detroit survived a 13-point first quarter against Philadelphia to win its 10th consecutive game.

Charles Barkley led the 76ers with 22 points before being ejected for elbowing Dennis Rodman in the face with 7:32 left in the game. Hersey Hawkins added 20 points for Philadelphia.

James Edwards had 18 points for Detroit, including 14 in the second half, as the Pistons rallied from an 18-point first-half deficit.

The lead changed hands nine times before Hawkins hit a pair of free throws to give Philadelphia a 94-92 lead with 1:19 left. A hook by Edwards tied the score with 1:07 to go and Bill Laimbeer put the Pistons ahead 95-94 when he hit the first of two free throws with 22 seconds remaining.

Bulls 124, Pacers 95

CHICAGO (AP) — Michael Jordan scored 20 of his 37 points on 10-for-11 shooting in the first quarter, leading Chicago's rout of Indiana.

The victory was the Bulls' fourth straight, while the Pacers, 0-8 on the road this season, have lost four consecutive games.

Chicago rolled to a 41-24 lead after the first quarter, outscoring the Pacers 18-6 in the final 3:51 of the period.

The Bulls went on to lead by 33 points in the second.

Cavaliers 101, Hawks 93

ATLANTA (AP) — Brad Daugherty scored 30 points and Larry Nance 22, including

a crucial shot with 1:54 remaining, as Cleveland defeated Atlanta for the Hawks' ninth consecutive loss.

The losing streak is the longest for the Hawks since the 1981 team lost 10 in a row. They also have lost five consecutive games at home.

Atlanta never trailed in the first half, but never recovered after Cleveland outscored the Hawks 25-11 in the third period.

Cleveland went ahead for good, 76-74, on a 16-foot jumper by Nance with 3:01 left in the quarter.

Dominique Wilkins led Atlanta with 25 points.

Warriors 119, Magic 113

ORLANDO, Florida (AP) — Chris Mullin scored 28 points and Mitch Richmond scored 9 crucial fourth-quarter points as Golden State handed Orlando its sixth straight loss.

Richmond, slowed by foul trouble most of the game, hit a turnaround jumper to snap a 109-109 tie with just under two minutes to play, then added four free throws down the stretch to enable Golden State to improve its record to 10-6 — the team's best start since the 1975-76 season.

Tim Hardaway scored 8 fourth-quarter points for the Warriors and finished with 18 points and 18 assists, while Richmond had 15 points in 25 minutes.

Rookie Dennis Scott hit a team-record six of 10, 3-point shots and led the Magic with 24 points.

Jazz 96, Timberwolves 79

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Jeff Malone scored 14 of his 19 points in the third quarter, leading Utah over Minnesota. The Jazz, who won their fifth consecutive game, outscored the Timberwolves 34-18 in the third period, turning a 1-point halftime lead into a commanding 75-58 advantage going into the final quarter.

Pooh Richardson had 22 points and 10 assists for the Timberwolves, while Tony Campbell added 19 points, including 13 in the second half.

Utah's Karl Malone had 16 points and 13 rebounds, and John Stockton added 15 assists for the Jazz.

Bucks 103, Knicks 97

MILWAUKEE (AP) — Jay Humphries scored 20 points and Fred Roberts had a key basket and steal down the stretch as Milwaukee beat New York to stay unbeaten at home.

The Bucks, 8-9 at the Bradley Centre, sent the Knicks to their fifth straight loss by holding centre Patrick Ewing to 12 points, matching his season low.

Alvin Robertson had 17 points, 15 assists and 10 rebounds for the Bucks. Charles Oakley led the Knicks with 19 points.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY DECEMBER 2, 1990

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: This is a good day to see the true value of whatever you are studying and to utilize your special dexterity of your hands, limbs and fingers. Go full ahead and make the purchases and sales that you need.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Now you can retire pretty much within your own thoughts and gain the answers and the perception for future activities that you desire there.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) A day to get out with as many good friends as possible and let them be aware that you understand their wishes and will aid them to obtain them.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You would be wise to get out in the world of activity now so put into motion with persons you respect their most important public wishes.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Look for new thoughts and directions that can be of service to you in putting across the various projects that you now have in mind.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) A day to take sometime out to consider just what your material position in life is and how you can best have a greater amount of security.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) It will require much conversa-

tion and stating of separate opinions in order to come to a better understanding with a partner but not now.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) A very good day to put more effort into making your environment in a more satisfactory condition and to take whatever measures are necessary.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Be off early to the recreation and amusements that lift your spirits and bring you a new sense of wellbeing and desire to produce more results.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Think about and study conditions at your own residence and just how more harmony can exist by removing some friction that exists.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Think early about some little jam or expedition you can take to liven up your day and with some usual companions you enjoy.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) A day when during spare moments you would be sensible to take a good look at your property and decide what you can do to improve it.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) You should awaken in a bright frame of mind and be able to arrange to see some friends with whom you have a special congeniality.

THE BETTER HALF

By Harris



"If you never tried chocolate chip and garlic pizza, how do you know you don't like it?"

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

MOPET

DOBOL

VARMEL

PRIMEE

Answers: MOPET, DOBOL, VARMEL, PRIMEE

Yesterday's Jumbles: ELEGY PANIC BOUNCE FABRIC

Answer: Another name for all that baggage that goes into the vehicle — "CAR-GO"

Answers Monday

Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

CHERRY PINE APPLE

LEMON LIME ORANGE

GRAPE PEAR PLUM

DATE FIG MANGO

COCONUT PINEAPPLE

GUAVA LEMONADE

APPLE JUICE

PEACH CUPCAKE

CHOCOLATE

ICE CREAM

PIZZA

WATERMELON

STRAWBERRY

PEACH

APPLE

LEMON

ORANGE

GRAPE

PLUM

DATE

FIG

MANGO

COCONUT

PINEAPPLE

GUAVA

LEMONADE

APPLE JUICE

PEACH CUPCAKE

CHOCOLATE

ICE CREAM

PIZZA

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STRAWBERRY

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PINEAPPLE

GUAVA

LEMONADE

APPLE JUICE

PEACH CUPCAKE

CHOCOLATE

ICE CREAM

PIZZA

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Crise du Golfe: dialogue sous la menace

Après une longue période de statu-quo et de blocage, l'ONU et les États-Unis ont pris jeudi deux mesures destinées à précipiter le règlement de la crise du Golfe, par la paix ou par la guerre. La clé de voûte de ce nouveau dispositif diplomatique est une date sur le calendrier, la date butoir du 15 janvier prochain au-delà de laquelle les Nations-Unies autorisent les États membres à faire usage de la force

contre l'Irak pour obtenir sa soumission aux résolutions antérieures, c'est à dire, pour l'essentiel, un retrait total du territoire koweïtien. Cette menace étant brandie et ces exigences réaffirmées, Washington offre à Bagdad ce qu'il refusait de lui accorder jusqu'ici malgré les demandes répétées de ce dernier: le dialogue à haut niveau entre responsables des deux pays. Reste à savoir si dans un tel contexte

il peut vraiment s'agir d'un dialogue ou si les concessions attendues sont à sens unique, rien d'autre ne pouvant être négocié que le retrait sans condition et sans contre-partie du Koweït, ce que l'Irak semble encore loin d'être prêt à accepter, même si Saddam Hussein a donné hier son accord à la rencontre Tarek Aziz-Bush à Washington.

Dans le but de faire un pas en avant, l'ONU a décidé de la paix, l'invite le ministre irakien des affaires étrangères à venir à Washington pour se rencontrer et je demande au Secrétaire d'Etat James Baker de se rendre à Bagdad pour y rencontrer Saddam Hussein. En apparence, la déclaration surprise prononcée vendredi par le président américain George Bush ouvre la porte à une solution négociée de la crise du Golfe. Cela d'autant plus qu'elle a été acceptée hier par les autorités irakiennes. Elle ne doit pas pourtant faire oublier qu'elle est intervenue le lendemain de l'adoption de la résolution 678 des Nations-Unies, qui réitère dans son premier paragraphe les résolutions précédentes (exigeant pour l'essentiel un retrait total du Koweït), qui constate que l'Irak ne s'y est pas soumis à ce jour et qui autorise, à partir du 15 janvier prochain, les États membres à user de «tous les moyens» pour obtenir satisfaction.

Proposition américaine, cette résolution a été adoptée à l'unanimité par les membres du Conseil de Sécurité (sauf Cuba) afin d'obtenir au plus vite le minimum de neuf voix sur quinze et l'absence de veto d'un des cinq membres

permanents du conseil, conditions nécessaires pour que le texte soit adopté. L'objectif a été largement atteint avec 12 voix pour, deux voix contre (celles de Cuba et du Yémen) et l'abstention de la Chine, membre permanent du Conseil.

Le geste d'ouverture américain s'accompagne donc d'une réaffirmation plus claire que jamais qu'il n'est pas question de transiger sur le principe du rétablissement du Koweït dans son intégrité et sa souveraineté. Du côté irakien, la détermination à ne pas céder sur ce point semble non moins solidement établie. Dès le texte de la résolution connu, l'Irak l'a rejetée en bloc et affirmé qu'il se battrait si nécessaire pour conserver sa main mise sur le Koweït.

Pour faire adopter leur résolution, les États-Unis ont dû accepter de petites concessions: la présentation, à la demande de la France, de la date butoir comme une «dernière chance en signe de bonne volonté» offerte à l'Irak de se conformer aux décisions de l'ONU; et la fixation, à la demande de l'URSS, de cette date butoir au 15 janvier et non au 1er janvier comme l'avaient proposé les États-Unis en précisant dès le départ que cette date ne constituait pas pour eux un impératif

absolu. En accélérant par cette résolution l'évolution de la crise du Golfe, Washington a obéi à des impératifs de stratégie. Les responsables militaires américains ont fait savoir à plusieurs reprises que toute action de force dans cette partie désertique du monde ne pouvait être entreprise que pendant une période relativement courte allant approximativement de novembre à mars. Au-delà, la chaleur et les vents de sable notoirement risquent de poser de sérieux problèmes. Au cours des huit ans de guerre entre l'Irak et l'Irak, par exemple, la plupart des grandes offensives qui se sont déroulées dans la région de Bassorah, au sud de l'Irak, ont toujours eu lieu à cette période de l'année.

Officiellement, la résolution est présentée comme une dernière tentative d'obtenir un retrait pacifique et consenti du Koweït, en insistant sur la menace d'une offensive militaire en cas de refus de l'Irak. Mais l'argument est à double tranchant. Si Saddam Hussein cède à la menace, l'argument aura fonctionné au bénéfice de la paix. Si Saddam résiste, en revanche, les États-Unis ont la souveraineté koweïtienne n'auront d'autre choix désormais que d'employer la force pour rester crédibles, sous peine d'offrir à Saddam la grande victoire psychologique d'avoir percé à juste titre la résolution 678 comme un coup de bluff. Sans retrait, la résolution 678 rend donc plus probable que jamais l'escalade d'un conflit armé. Même si l'ex-

pression «tous les moyens» n'évoque pas nécessairement l'usage de la force et si rien n'oblige les États membres à agir dès l'expiration du délai. Israël ne s'y est pas trompé qui a abandonné sa politique de profil bas adoptée depuis le début de la crise pour décréter l'état d'alerte avancé et multiplier les mises en garde. Le général Avihou Bin Nun, chef de l'armée de l'air israélienne a annoncé que ses experts s'efforçaient actuellement de mettre au point des techniques permettant à Israël de devancer une attaque irakienne «dans les mois, dans les semaines, voire dans les jours et les heures à venir». En Allemagne, Helmut Lipert, porte-parole du parti écologiste des Verts a estimé que le Conseil avait donné à «son accord pour l'amorçage d'une bombe», ajoutant que «celui qui pratique des ultimatum contre des dictateurs obstinés s'oblige à déclencher lui-même l'explosion». Cuba enfin, a justifié son vote contre, en dénonçant le «chèque en blanc» ainsi donné par le Conseil de Sécurité aux États-Unis et en affirmant que l'objectif des États-Unis n'est pas le retrait de l'Irak du Koweït mais le renversement du président irakien Saddam Hussein, ce qui signifie que la guerre est «inévit-

able». Pour ce qui est de l'ouverture du dialogue offerte par le président Bush, les interprétations varient. Les plus optimistes estiment qu'elle peut aboutir à une véritable négociation. Le Yémen, notamment, avait affirmé dès avant l'adoption de la résolution que «l'Irak était ouvert au dialogue et que si le président Bush envoyait un émissaire personnel à Bagdad, à Genève ou dans n'importe quelle capitale arabe pour rencontrer un dirigeant irakien ce serait une étape très positive».

D'autres en revanche estiment que cette offre de dialogue n'est que la part des États-Unis qu'une manœuvre tactique destinée à pouvoir justifier une prochaine action militaire, en affirmant que tout a été fait (en vain) pour obtenir une solution négociée. Ce pourrait être aussi le moyen de

calmer l'irritation de Saddam Hussein face à cette nouvelle résolution pour le dissuader d'ouvrir le feu avant l'échéance du 15 janvier et permettre aux nouveaux renforts américains (300 avions militaires servis par quelque 10.000 aviateurs et techniciens) d'ancrer le Golfe et d'être opérationnels.

Il n'est pas tout à fait impossible, toutefois, que le geste d'ouverture de Washington permette à Saddam Hussein sans perdre la face de faire un geste symétrique, qui pourrait être le retrait du Koweït. L'acceptation hier de la rencontre Tarek Aziz-Bush pourrait en être un léger indice.

Quoi qu'il en soit, la proposition américaine s'avère très utile au président Bush: si elle aboutit à un retrait irakien, c'est à lui qu'en reviendront les lauriers; si elle échoue, il aura dans six semaines les mains entièrement libres pour déclencher la guerre.

Jean-Marc Bordes

Le précédent coréen

Ce n'est pas la première fois que les Nations-Unies autorisent l'usage de la force contre un des membres de l'Organisation. En 1950, soit cinq ans après la création de l'ONU, le Conseil de Sécurité avait donné son accord pour l'usage de la force, afin de repousser les forces de Corée du Nord ayant envahi la république de Corée du Sud.

Cette première et historique décision avait été prise le 27 juin 1950 par l'ensemble des membres du Conseil, à l'époque au nombre de onze, mais avec l'absence notable de l'URSS qui avait refusé de siéger.

Les États avaient alors donné l'ordre à leur aviation et à leur marine de soutenir activement les forces militaires sud-coréennes avant de déployer leur armée de terre.

Face à ses difficultés financières

La Jordanie doit revoir son système fiscal

Accroître les recettes nationales par le moyen efficace d'une fiscalité accrue est le seul moyen pour la Jordanie de compenser la diminution de ses recettes. Une diminution causée par la chute de l'assistance financière arabe, notamment depuis l'éclosion de la crise du Golfe, comme nous l'avons expliqué dans un article précédent (voir «Le Jourdain» du 18 novembre dernier).

La fiscalité actuellement en vigueur en Jordanie, qu'elle soit directe ou indirecte, n'a pas atteint le niveau qu'il faudrait pour parvenir à augmenter les recettes fiscales et atténuer la dépendance financière vis-à-vis de l'extérieur. Cette fiscalité réduite ne provient pas seulement de la structure économique du pays, mais aussi de la nature du système fiscal et des moyens d'appliquer ses dispositions.

En 1988, le prélèvement fiscal ne dépassait pas 18% du Produit National Brut (PNB). Ce pourcentage représente certes un doublement réalisé sur les deux dernières années, mais il faut signaler que le potentiel fiscal pour un pays en voie de développement est généralement considéré comme pouvant varier entre 30% et 40% du PNB. Il apparaît donc que le potentiel fiscal inexploité en Jordanie est encore important.

Pour être efficace, le système fiscal exige aussi un personnel compétent et capable, qui connaisse bien la loi, les conditions et les techniques de contrôle. Il nécessite un recrutement de personnes ayant une formation technique supérieure, des diplômes en droit et en économie. Une formation technique du personnel pourrait être réalisée directement au sein de la Direction ou prendre la forme de stages dans des pays étrangers, puisqu'il n'existe pas à ce jour d'école nationale des impôts. Comme le souligne le professeur Gaudement, «les pays qui ne disposent que d'une administration fiscale imparfaitement entraînée devront se contenter de techniques fiscales rudimentaires».

LA SEMAINE... de Suleiman Sweiss

...En attendant la pluie

Ainsi le mois de novembre s'achève sans qu'on ait vu la pluie en Jordanie. C'est le signe annonciateur d'une mauvaise saison. Déjà les paysans s'inquiètent, et le mouvement islamique appelle les fidèles à la prière de circonstance. Notre pays dépend trop des facteurs naturels, particulièrement dans le domaine des eaux.



L'été dernier, l'eau était encore un sujet d'inquiétude pour les Jordaniens. Un problème dont on a pris conscience il y a deux ans. On a réalisé alors les dangers d'un manque d'eau si on ne rationalisait pas notre consommation de cet élément. Cette consommation est de l'ordre de 730 millions de m3 par an actuellement. Elle sera de 1.030 millions de m3 en l'an 2025. Nos sources d'eau diminuent tandis que nos besoins augmentent.

Ce ne sont d'ailleurs pas les seules causes de la «crise de l'eau». Le gaspillage dans ce domaine est considérable. Certaines études estiment que la perte d'eau en Jordanie atteint parfois le taux de 30% à cause de réseaux usés qui auraient dû être renouvelés depuis 15 ou 20 ans. De même, le coût d'extraction de l'eau est élevé et le sera plus encore à l'avenir. Nous devons trouver les moyens de réduire ce coût. L'autre problème à résoudre est d'améliorer la qualité de l'eau potable. Enfin, nous devons exploiter de façon plus rationnelle nos eaux, qu'elles soient destinées à l'agriculture, à l'industrie ou à la consommation ordinaire.

Pour le moment, le problème de l'eau ne se pose pas de façon aiguë, mais il risque de devenir grave dans quelques années si nous ne prenons pas d'ores et déjà les mesures nécessaires.

C'est d'autant plus vrai que l'eau a toujours constitué un problème pour les États de la région. Certains soutiennent que ce problème pourrait être à l'origine de guerres, vus les quantités et les sources limitées d'eau disponibles. L'été dernier, notre ministre de l'Irrigation a révélé à la télévision qu'Israël n'a pas hésité à voler les deux-tiers des eaux des territoires palestiniens occupés et du fleuve Litani au sud-Liban. Le fameux projet de barrage à Al-Wahda pour l'exploitation des eaux du Yarmouk (entre la Jordanie et la Syrie) a été paralysé par des pressions politiques entre autres raisons. On connaît les péripéties entre la Syrie, l'Irak et la Turquie il y a un an à propos de l'exploitation des eaux de l'Euphrate.

Pour toutes ces raisons, nous devons résoudre ce problème une fois pour toute, et cela n'est pas impossible. Depuis bien longtemps, nous aurions dû profiter des quantités d'eau dont nous disposons. Pour cela, nous pouvons développer la construction de petits barrages et de puits afin de conserver les eaux de pluie. Nous pouvons développer la réutilisation des eaux consommées à des fins agricoles. Il suffit de faire fonctionner les stations de purification existantes à plein. Nous devons éduquer les citoyens en permanence sur la nécessité d'économiser l'eau. Nous ne pourrions pas continuer éternellement à nous payer le luxe de laver notre voiture et d'arroser les fleurs tous les jours de l'été.

Seuls les paysans qui vivent de la terre peuvent mesurer la gravité de l'arrivée tardive et de la rareté de la pluie en cette fin novembre. Notre conscience s'est réveillée un peu tard pour envisager des solutions radicales. Récemment, sous l'effet de la crise du Golfe, le gouvernement a mis sur pied un plan d'urgence pour développer l'agriculture. On a annoncé également des décisions de construire des petits barrages. D'autres décisions ont été prises concernant la redistribution des terres pour l'encouragement des jeunes à travailler dans l'agriculture. Ce sera un bon début si nous voulons réduire nos importations en produits alimentaires et mieux résister au blocus que nous imposent injustement les Américains ces jours-ci. Ils ont grand temps que nous renforçons notre indépendance par rapport aux facteurs extérieurs.

Politique

La société au cœur des débats

Une étincelle a allumé la colère qui couvait depuis un certain temps déjà dans la société jordanienne. Une rumeur s'est répandue selon laquelle des personnels de l'ambassade américaine à Amman auraient, sous couvert d'inspecter les camps de transit à la frontière irako-jordanienne, contrôlé en fait le bon respect par la Jordanie de l'embargo commercial contre l'Irak.

«Il faut réagir aux abus et aux agressions en tous genres contre les Jordaniens», affirme un chef d'entreprise qui préfère l'anonymat. «J'ai récemment entendu dire qu'un groupe de jeunes jordaniens menaient d'utiliser tous les moyens possibles pour empêcher l'intervention des diplomates américains dans nos affaires si ces ingérences continuent».

La société au cœur des débats

La société au cœur des débats

Apparemment, cette fureur ne cesse de croître; et l'homme de la rue comme les étudiants condamnent et menacent. «Bien sûr nous sommes fâchés, ils n'ont pas le droit... C'est illégal, dit un groupe d'étudiants à la faculté de médecine de l'université de Jordanie. C'est déjà insupportable de voir leurs interventions et leurs inspections permanentes des bateaux qui arrivent au port d'Aqaba, cela ne leur suffit pas?»

Un parlement, ce sujet a servi de point de départ à quelques députés afin d'exprimer le mécontentement du peuple jordanien contre cette intervention, qui constitue pour l'un d'eux une «menace contre la souveraineté du peuple jordanien sur sa terre».

Fakhri Kassar ainsi que Mansour Seif Eddin Murad ont stigmatisé les actes «scandaleux» des Américains en condamnant sévèrement cette intervention et en demandant au gouvernement de prendre des mesures efficaces contre ces actes. L'un d'eux a aussi réclamé l'expulsion de l'ambassadeur américain en Jordanie «pour ses activités d'espionnage».

«Tous ces émigrés se sont vus refuser du travail simplement parce qu'ils n'ont pas accompli leur service militaire, étant à l'étranger, explique un député. Leur incapacité à payer la somme qui leur permettrait d'être dispensés les oblige à vivre dans des conditions assez difficiles. Ayant fait le choix de rentrer en Jordanie, il leur est maintenant interdit de rentrer au Koweït pour reprendre leur travail.

Agriculture

Quelques députés ont évoqué également les problèmes des agriculteurs. Ces derniers ont été gravement affectés par la réorientation des plantations vers les céréales, préconisée par le ministre de l'Agriculture jordanien. Il

s'est avéré en effet que les débouchés pour ces produits sont restreints.

«C'est bien gentil de nous donner des terres», s'exclame un agriculteur, mais ce qui nous manque ce sont des moyens de financement pour le matériel et les insecticides. Il faut aussi parler du problème de l'eau salée dans la vallée du Jourdain qui représente une menace pour l'avenir des plantes et des produits agricoles».

Un de députés a mis l'accent sur ce sujet en insistant sur les maladies des plantes et la souffrance des agriculteurs causée par les pertes permanentes qu'a engendrées la baisse des prix sur le marché.

«La plupart des agriculteurs ne gagnent même pas de quoi nourrir décemment leurs familles, dit-il, ce qui est dû essentiellement aux pertes résultant des maladies qui attaquent leurs plantes, notamment dans le sud de la vallée du Jourdain.» Il propose par conséquent la création d'un comité au ministère de l'Agriculture, doté d'un rôle consultatif et préventif, pour mener une enquête sur les origines de ces maladies.

Pour compléter le système, les dispositions suivantes pourraient être ajoutées aux dispositions actuelles.

La première consisterait à créer un impôt sur les héritages. D'un point de vue social, cette imposition permet d'atténuer l'écart entre les classes sociales et il permet d'espérer des recettes importantes puisqu'à ce jour aucun prélèvement n'est opéré, que ce soit sur la valeur de l'héritage ou sur la part de l'héritier.

La mise en place d'une imposition des revenus provenant de l'extérieur pourrait aussi s'avérer utile. Ces revenus ne sont pas sujets à l'imposition, même si le contribuable est de nationalité jordanienne et a une résidence habituelle dans le royaume. Cette lacune de la législation doit être corrigée, car plusieurs contribuables, sceptiques quant aux rendements de l'économie jordanienne, préfèrent investir leurs capitaux à l'étranger. Ils bénéficient donc de revenus qui échappent à l'imposition sur les bénéfices.

Les impôts directs représentent 18% des recettes fiscales, soit

En bref

Shamir. Le parlement israélien a repoussé lundi, par 57 voix contre 48, quatre motions de censure déposées par l'opposition de gauche contre les déclarations du Premier ministre Yitzhak Shamir, la semaine dernière, sur le droit des Juifs à s'installer «dans le grand Israël de la Méditerranée au Jourdain».

Libération. Le président irakien Saddam Hussein a décidé lundi d'autoriser le départ d'un «certain nombre» d'otages américains avec leurs familles venues en Irak pour leur rendre visite. Une trentaine de femmes d'otages américains étaient attendues dans la capitale irakienne pour profiter de l'offre de l'Irak de passer les fêtes de fin d'année avec leurs époux. Lors de la rencontre avec les familles, le chef de l'Etat irakien a réitéré la volonté de son pays d'instaurer une paix globale dans la région.

Major. Encore inconnu du grand public il y a quelques mois, John Major est devenu mardi dernier le nouveau Premier ministre conservateur britannique après la démission surprise de Margaret Thatcher. Ancien chancelier de l'Echiquier, Major a franchi tous les échelons ministériels en un temps record, une ascension qui doit autant à sa loyauté qu'à son pragmatisme politique. Contrairement aux aristocrates du gouvernement, il vient d'un milieu populaire et a passé une partie de son enfance à Brixton, quartier pauvre de la banlieue de Londres, où la famille avait du démenager après la faillite de son père. Avant de monter un petit commerce, Tom Major a été un artiste de music-hall et, à l'occasion, un trapéziste de cirque. Il s'est lancé très tôt dans la politique avec les Jeunes conservateurs. Pro-européen, il a proposé cette semaine l'idée d'un «ECU lourd» comme alternative au plan Delors sur l'union économique et monétaire.

Pologne. Le Premier ministre polonais Tadeusz Mazowiecki a présenté lundi soir la démission de son gouvernement en «tirant les conclusions» de son échec au premier tour de l'élection présidentielle polonaise. Le Premier ministre, qui dirigeait depuis quinze mois le premier gouvernement non-communiste de l'après-guerre, a été battu dimanche dernier par Lech Walesa et Stanislaw Tymiński. Ceux-ci s'affronteront le 9 décembre, lors du second tour des élections présidentielles pour succéder au général Jaruzelski. Lech Walesa a aussitôt réagi en déclarant que la démission du gouvernement de M. Mazowiecki «témoigne d'irresponsabilité, de manque de calme et de non respect de la démocratie».

Tchad. Les rebelles d'Idriss Deby viennent de remporter une victoire importante sur les forces gouvernementales tchadiennes en s'emparant jeudi, sans combat, d'Abéché, la plus importante ville de l'est du Tchad. En confirmant la chute d'Abéché, un porte-parole du ministère français des Affaires Étrangères a précisé vendredi qu'il n'y a pas eu d'action contre les soldats français. «La mission des forces françaises n'est pas d'intervenir dans les affrontements entre Tchadiens», a-t-il souligné. Fuyant l'avancée des troupes rebelles, le chef de l'Etat tchadien, Hissène Habré, a quitté N'Djamena la nuit dernière avec ses troupes. Les 1.000 civils français vivant au Tchad ont été regroupés en vue d'un rapatriement.

Tunnel. Un ouvrier français et un britannique ont abattu hier matin la dernière paroi de craie bleue qui, à 100m sous la Manche, sépare les équipes françaises et britanniques dans le tunnel qui doit relier en 1993 la France à la Grande-Bretagne. Les deux ouvriers ont ainsi consacré un exploit technique: alors que les Japonais avaient mis 24 ans pour creuser un tunnel de 53 km reliant les îles de Honshu et Hokkaido, les Français et les Britanniques auront mis moins de sept ans (1986-1993) à forer 35 km de tunnels grâce à une technologie... japonaise.

Cinéma. Le film de Marcel Carné «Les enfants du paradis» a été désigné lundi meilleur film français du siècle, au cours de la soirée «La plus belle nuit du cinéma», organisée à Paris par la chaîne de télévision Canal Plus. Une cinquantaine d'acteurs ont participé à cette grande soirée du septième art, au cours de laquelle ont été projetés 300 extraits de films de ces soixante dernières années. Le meilleur film du siècle a été choisi par référendum sur une liste de 111 films auprès de 600 professionnels du cinéma français.

Attentats contre Israël

Israël a fait face cette semaine à une multiplication des incidents le long de ses frontières, marquée notamment par un attentat sanglant perpétré dimanche dernier près de sa frontière avec l'Egypte et par une attaque suicide au Liban sud.

Lors de l'attentat soupçonné d'avoir été perpétré par un conscript égyptien, Ayman Hassan, quatre soldats israéliens ont été tués et 23 autres personnes blessées, dont cinq grièvement. Près de la frontière égyptienne, à une vingtaine de km au nord d'Eilat, Hassan, vêtu d'une tenue de camouflage militaire a ouvert le feu à l'arme automatique contre quatre véhicules militaires puis contre un autobus qui circulait sur la route reliant Eilat à Qadesh Barnea, au sud d'Israël.

Ayman Hassan, 22 ans, affirme n'appartenir à aucun groupe politique ou religieux. Mais il prétend avoir agi par révolte contre la répression exercée par Israël sur les Palestiniens des territoires occupés.

Quelques heures plus tard, deux soldats israéliens ont été légèrement blessés près du château de Beaufort, au Liban sud, lors d'une opération suicide menée par une femme qui s'est donnée la mort en faisant sauter, devant une patrouille israélienne, la charge d'explosifs qu'elle transportait. Il s'agit de la première attaque à la «bombe humaine» contre une patrouille de l'armée israélienne au Liban sud depuis plus d'un an.

A Beyrouth, le parti syrien national social a affirmé que l'attentat avait été perpétré par une de ses militantes dans le secteur central de la «zone de sécurité», créée et occupée par Israël. Cet attentat, selon le PSNS, a fait plusieurs tués parmi les soldats israéliens.

Autre sujet d'inquiétude pour Israël, la multiplication depuis quelque temps des infiltrations à travers la ligne de cessez-le-feu jordanais-israélienne, longue de 370 km et longtemps considérée comme une frontière de paix de facto.

Confrontée à cette multiplication d'incidents, Israël estime que la montée de l'intégrisme religieux chez ses voisins arabes est devenue un danger majeur pour sa sécurité.

Il y a en Egypte, en Syrie et en Jordanie une propagande fanatique extrémiste qui répand la haine contre nous et il y a des gens qui représentent à leur compte cette propagande», a affirmé dimanche dernier M. Shamir devant une délégation de la communauté juive française.

Dr Wahib Alami

Faculté d'économie Université du Yarmouk

Sacha Kharati

«Météorage»

La foudre sous surveillance

«Et du haut de l'Olympe, Zeus brandit la foudre...» Il est fort probable que c'est à ce phénomène météorologique que, bien avant la mythologie grecque, l'Homme dut la possession du feu...

Manifestation terrifiante aux conséquences parfois cataclysmiques, la foudre fut longtemps reconnue comme d'origine divine. Ce n'est que vers le milieu du XVIII^{ème} siècle que des savants s'y intéressèrent de plus près, bien souvent au péril de leur vie: Franklin et bien d'autres

avaient imaginé de lancer des cerfs-volants par temps d'orage en les retenant par une ficelle mouillée! Nous lui devons néanmoins l'invention du paratonnerre.

Il n'en demeure pas moins que la foudre frappe souvent et qu'on ne compte pas moins d'un million d'arcs électriques chaque année entre le sol de la France et le ciel, avec parfois des recrudescences telles que le 8 mai 1989, où la foudre s'est abattue plus de 25.000 fois en cette seule journée.

Beaucoup de connaissances ont été acquises ces dernières années sur les mécanismes qui conditionnent l'orage et l'apparition de la foudre. Il suffit d'une dizaine de kilomètres carrés de sol surchauffé pour que l'air propulsé par la chaleur et souvent aidé par le relief, monte en une colonne verticale si rapide qu'il se condense en gouttelettes d'eau et devient un nuage monstrueux de 5 à 12.000 mètres d'épaisseur, qui peut se déplacer à plus de 100 km/h en accumulant une énorme quantité d'énergie.

L'air, qui se refroidit trop vite à cette altitude, se fige en cristaux de glace: la différence de température entre le sol et le sommet du nuage crée un véritable condensateur accumulant plusieurs millions de volts entre le sommet du nuage (pôle positif) et sa base (pôle négatif). L'ensemble planant au-dessus du sol, c'est à dire la Terre, elle-même pôle fortement positif: les niveaux atteints sont tellement élevés qu'une décharge devient inévitable.

Tout commence alors par un pré-éclair, naissant au sol à partir de n'importe quel objet pointu et montant à l'assaut du ciel à 1.000 km/seconde pour y rencontrer un autre précurseur qui naît, lui, de la base du nuage, le tout presque invisible à l'œil nu. Leur rencontre crée le canal conducteur sur lequel l'éclair, tel que nous le connaissons, se formera quelques secondes plus tard en un formidable court-circuit de 200.000 à 400.000 ampères, montant du sol à la vitesse de 300.000 km/seconde. En quelques micro-secondes, la chaleur est telle que l'air chauffé à plus de 30.000 degrés se dilate brusquement en une onde de choc que nous appelons le tonnerre.

Les conséquences de la libération brutale de ces énormes quantités d'énergie sont loin d'être négligeables. Elles sont d'abord humaines, puisque l'on compte aux environs de 50 morts par an, mais aussi animales: 200 bêtes sont foudroyées, ce qui mérite d'être pris en compte, ne serait-ce que sur le plan économique, ainsi que les innombrables dégâts matériels.

Autre conséquence: ces quantités d'énergie électrique, que l'on évalue à la puissance des premières bombes nucléaires, concentrées sur un très bref instant, engendrent une onde radio-électrique sur plusieurs kilomètres: ce que ne supportent pas les installations électriques ni les réseaux informatiques si complexes et si répandus. Elles entraînent aussi de réels dangers dans les industries de transformation chimique, pétrolière, électronique, ne serait-ce d'ailleurs que par les risques que provoque une coupure de courant inopinée. Le danger n'est pas moindre pour la circulation aérienne,



pour les fusées (Apollo XII en 1969... et récemment une Ariane (TV-SAT IV) dont le départ dut être retardé), ainsi qu'en mer où, chaque année, des cargos sont foudroyés.

C'est pourquoi une société privée a installé en France un réseau de surveillance unique au monde qui fonctionne depuis trois ans. Le système «Météorage-Franklin» a disposé sur l'ensemble du territoire 18 capteurs auxiliaires s'ajoutant à 3 autres capteurs mis en place en Suisse (les orages étant particulièrement redoutables en montagne).

Autant de zones surveillées où le capteur enregistre les ondes radio-électriques chaque fois que la foudre frappe, permettant de localiser l'orage dans un rayon de 300 km avec une précision de 1 à 3 km. Mis au point par l'ONERA (Etudes et Recherches Aéronautiques), le dispositif commercialisé par la société «Dimensions» utilise l'interférométrie magnétique et les variations du champ électrostatique, le tout relayé sur les écrans Minitel des abonnés.

Une version légère, d'un coût de 120.000 FF permet aux industriels concernés d'être prévenus à temps et d'interrompre ou de différer des opérations sensibles (fabrication de composants électroniques, d'explosifs, de produits instables ou inflammables,

etc.). Une version plus élaborée est destinée aux aéroports, à l'armée (explosifs, missiles...) et aux centres spatiaux, dont celui de Kourou, en Guyane.

Il est bien évident que cela intéresse beaucoup les scientifiques, qui disposent ainsi d'un moyen efficace pour étudier de plus près les orages et constituer des archives indiscutables: jusqu'à présent, ils ne pouvaient compter que sur les bonnes volontés locales qui leur signalaient qu'il y avait eu un orage tel jour à telle heure et, bien évidemment, sans aucune mesure quantitative. Chose curieuse à ce sujet: on a constaté que les plus violents orages, les «super-bolts» à 400.000 ampères, étaient l'apanage des orages d'hiver, d'octobre à mai.

Il est non moins évident que cette surveillance des zones orageuses joue un rôle dans le domaine de la protection civile, et notamment en ce qui concerne les épouvantables incendies de forêt que la foudre allume chaque année. Il y a aussi les assureurs qui ne négligent pas ces données leur permettant de déjouer des manœuvres abusives... Loin d'être un luxe scientifique, la localisation des orages a donc le coup de foudre à bien des secteurs de l'économie française.

Jean Chabrier

Les collaborateurs du «Jourdain» sous les feux de la rampe

Vous connaissez tous les talents de plume de Flavia Romero et de Sami Kamal, qui aujourd'hui encore jettent sur cette page les lumières de leur colonne hebdomadaire. Vous aurez bientôt l'occasion de les voir et les entendre puisqu'ils animeront, tous les deux cette semaine, l'actualité culturelle d'Amman.

C'est de cuisine - une de ses passions - que Flavia Romero parlera, le mercredi 5 à 18h, au Centre Culturel Français. Intitulée «Que le feu soit... et la cuisine fut», cette conférence retracera l'histoire de la préparation des mets et de la confection des plats. Une histoire qui reflète les cultures propres à chaque espace ou période de civilisation et dont les origines sont entourées de mystère...

Cette conférence s'inscrit dans le cadre de la semaine de la cuisine française qui se tient au Marriott du 2 au 8 décembre.

De son côté, au Goethe Institut, Sami Kamal présentera chacun des films du festival Fritz Lang qui débutera le mardi 4 à 20h pour se terminer le 29 décembre. (Voir FOCUS.) Sami Kamal, diplômé du département cinéma et télévision de l'Université de Californie à Los Angeles (UCLA), évoquera l'âge d'or du cinéma allemand - l'expressionnisme - dont Fritz Lang, qui aurait 100 ans cette année, est un des plus prestigieux représentants.

Deux prestations à ne pas manquer, si la culture vous intéresse et vous émeut...

A L'AFFICHE

Centenaire Fritz Lang

Maudit mais moral

Le festival couvrant la période allemande du cinéaste Fritz Lang - au Goethe Institut durant le mois de décembre - nous propose une série de films dont certains ont fait date.

Les deux premières œuvres - *Dr Mabuse der Spieler* (1922) et les *Nibelungen* (1923-1925) - appartiennent à un chapitre extraordinaire du cinéma muet. La période d'après guerre, entre 1919 et 1925, fut caractérisée par des trouvailles de metteurs-en-scène allemands portant sur l'évolution du langage cinématographique (éclairage, décors, thématiques). Fritz Lang, une de ses vedettes, s'imposa par une esthétique rigoureuse et la moralité exigeante avec laquelle il a traité des obsessions philosophiques allemandes de l'époque. Cette parodie politique parait déjà en 1922 des dangers d'une idéologie du surhomme et de la volonté de puissance. Dix ans après, en 1933, un second film, présenté comme un tableau de son temps, *Das Testament des Dr Mabuse* (le dimanche 9) aura pour héros un fou débauché des préceptes du National-Socialisme. Le parti nazi qui venait de s'installer au pouvoir le censura, faisant ainsi du *Testament* le dernier film allemand de Fritz Lang, qui quitta l'Allemagne le soir même de l'interdiction.

C'est encore comme du témoignage d'une époque qu'on peut parler des *Nibelungen* traduction cinématographique de l'épopée des Allemands. Produite à un moment difficile dans la vie politique du pays - la jeune république de Weimar était en train de se mettre en place - elle avait pour but, selon Lang, de rallier les gens du pays autour d'un appel à leur passé légendaire. Si cette œuvre - en deux parties: *Siegfried* (le samedi 15) et *Kriemhilds Rache* (le dimanche 16) - s'impose aujourd'hui encore, c'est moins pour son importance socio-politique que par le fait qu'elle représente, par son emploi méticuleux de l'acteur, par ses décors minutieusement construits et par sa cadence étudiée, un aspect de l'art plastique du réalisateur.

Avant de passer à son chef-d'œuvre de la même époque et son premier film parlant, *«M»*: *Elise Stedt sucht den Mörder* (M le Maudit, 1931), le programme anticipe. Ayant fait les nazis en 1933, Lang se fit connaître du public de son pays d'adoption - les Etats-Unis - par *Fury* (1936), le drame macabre d'un lynchage qui fut aussi une étude de la «royocratie». Peu après, il repartit travailler dans les genres qui lui inspiraient un commentaire social: le policier et les drames d'aventures, se bécotant une dernière carrière à Hollywood. Celle-ci sera représentée dans le festival par un troisième genre, purement américain, le Western. *The return of Frank James* (le samedi 22), premier des trois films qu'il a tournés, avec Western Union (1944) et *Rancho notorio* (1953), soulignera des thèmes entrecroisés et familiers: vengeance, justice et corruption.

Côtant le festival, «M le Maudit» reprend l'histoire d'un tueur d'enfants recherché autant par la police que par la pègre. A part l'interrogation sur la validité d'une justice rendue par des criminels, ce drame psychologique montre clairement comment l'expressionnisme a fini par s'intégrer. Il est aussi distingué par la fascinante interprétation par Peter Lorre d'un meurtrier malgré lui, une des plus estimées encore de l'histoire du cinéma.

Sami Kamal

EXPOSITIONS

Agatha. Exposition de photographies présentant la «Forêt Goethe» située non loin de Taffel, qui a reçu ce nom en 1887 par décret royal en hommage aux spécialistes allemands qui l'ont plantée. Agatha Valters Center, du mardi 4 décembre à 15h30 (inauguration) jusqu'au 10 décembre.

Kawa. En 36 panneaux illustrés de photographies noir et blanc, un hommage au café et à la civilisation des hommes qui le découvrit, de la Grèce à l'Egypte, en passant par la Turquie et la Jordanie. «L'Orient des cafés», au Centre Culturel Français à partir du 3 décembre et jusqu'à la fin de mai.

DIVERS

Enfants. Film en allemand pour les enfants présenté en vidéo et intitulé «Die pyramide des Sonnengottes» (La pyramide des dieux Soleil). Institut Goethe, le samedi 8 décembre, à 16h.

TELEVISION

DIMANCHE

17h30 - «Grand prix». Téléfilm policier de la série «Les cinq dernières minutes».
19h00 - Le Journal.
19h15 - Carnet de notes. Extraits de musique classique.

LUNDI

18h00 - L'oiseau des mers. Dessin animé.
18h10 - Denver le dernier dinosaure. Dessin animé.
18h35 - Aventures voyages. Magazine de l'aventure.
19h00 - Le Journal.
19h15 - Magazine sportif hebdomadaire.

MARDI

18h00 - Le vent domestique. Dessin animé.
18h10 - L'école des fées. Des enfants interprètent le répertoire d'un chanteur célèbre, sous la houlette de Jacques Martin.
19h00 - Le Journal.
19h15 - Aujourd'hui en Jordanie. Magazine réalisé et présenté par Saleh Madi.

MERCREDI

18h00 - «De Gaulle ou l'éternel défi». Cinquante épisodes de la série de Jean Lacouture sur ce grand personnage français qui aurait en cent ans cette année.
19h00 - Le Journal.
19h15 - Sélection de variétés françaises.

JEUDI

18h00 - L'oiseau des mers. Dessin animé.
18h10 - Smokey. Dessin animé.
18h35 - Splendeurs sauvages. Documentaire sur la vie des animaux.
19h00 - Le Journal.
19h15 - Reportages d'actualité.

VENREDI

17h30 - «Le sucre». Film français avec Michel Piccoli sur les professionnels de la spéculation.
19h00 - Le Journal.
19h15 - Histoire de l'art. Série documentaire.

SAMEDI

18h00 - Les fruits de la passion. Les meilleurs moments de cette émission qui retrace le parcours de sportifs célèbres.
19h00 - Le Journal.
19h15 - Aujourd'hui en France. Magazine culturel français.

CINEMA

Cinéma. Le CCF inaugure cette semaine son mois du court métrage. Ce mardi, il propose sept films courts d'une dizaine de minutes chacun.

On ne sait pas toujours que de nombreux grands cinéastes, tels que Louis Malle ou François Truffaut, ont souvent réalisé avec brio des courts métrages au cours de leur carrière. Souvent ignorés du public ces films constituent pour beaucoup d'entre eux de véritables joyaux de septième art. Centre Culturel Français, le 4 décembre à 20h.

Sans blague!

Aristote et l'affaire palestinienne

[Pour être bien conseillé, Bush, encore vice-président, entreprit de faire construire un ordinateur super-géant (baptisé Aristote) doté d'un système d'intelligence artificielle extrêmement perfectionné. Tout récemment mis en service, celui-ci avait déjà convaincu Bush qu'il était dans l'intérêt des Etats-Unis de laisser les Arabes résoudre eux-mêmes la crise du Golfe.]

Sa partie de golf achevée, Bush revint dans son bureau oval et s'empressa de décrocher le téléphone rose et de composer le numéro de code d'Aristote. Immédiatement, il entendit une voix devenue familière lui dire:

-Bonjour M. le président. Je suis à votre disposition.
-Bonjour Aristote. J'aimerais discuter aujourd'hui d'un conflit qui traîne depuis fort longtemps et qui commence à embarrasser sérieusement notre politique au Moyen-Orient: le conflit palestinien.

-Dans cette affaire, une chose me chiffonne: pourquoi au départ avoir choisi de soutenir Israël?

-On pensait avoir un Etat «à nous» au Moyen-Orient. Sa mission devait être de faire la police dans le coin, de déstabiliser et de retarder le développement des pays de la région et de nous aider du point de vue «intelligence». Moyennant tout cela, on était prêt à lui verser quelques milliards par an.

-En pratique, Israël a échoué dans la plupart des objectifs énumérés. Dans la crise du Golfe, non seulement il n'a été d'aucune utilité (on a dû envoyer nos propres forces en Arabie) mais il a constitué un fardeau extrêmement embarrassant. Par ailleurs, il s'est avéré en plusieurs occasions, et en particulier dans l'affaire de nos Marines au Liban d'octobre 1983, qu'Israël était prêt à sacrifier nos intérêts aux siens: le Mossad, quoiqu'en courant de l'attentat à la voiture piégée a fait exprès de ne pas en informer la CIA: cela nous a finalement coûté 241 victimes et nous a obligés à effectuer un retrait des plus humiliants au Liban.

-N'empêche que, du point de vue de la déstabilisation et de la création d'obstacles au progrès des pays de la région, Israël a parfaitement réussi!

-Ça conduit à la naissance du terrorisme ainsi qu'à la haine et à la méfiance de tout les peuples de la région à notre égard. Ce n'est indéniablement pas la notre intérêt. C'est plutôt - et encore

très discutablement - dans l'intérêt des Sionistes, qui continuent à rêver de réaliser le Grand Israël.

-Néanmoins, comment envisager d'assurer un écoulement régulier du pétrole de la région sans un Israël omniprésent?

-N'est-ce pas l'opposé de ce qu'il faut? Ce qu'il faudrait plutôt reconnaître, c'est que ce sont les agressions et l'intransigence d'Israël qui ont été jusqu'à la seule responsables des à-coups ressentis dans l'approvisionnement en pétrole: en 1956, l'attaque tri-partite contre l'Egypte, dans laquelle Israël a joué un rôle prépondérant, a bloqué le canal de Suez pendant plusieurs mois. Ce canal a encore été bloqué par la suite, mais cette fois-ci pour huit ans, à cause de la guerre déclenchée par l'Etat hébreu en juin 1967. L'embargo décrété sur le pétrole par les pays arabes producteurs à l'automne 1973, quoique résultant de la guerre déclenchée cette fois «contre Israël» par l'Egypte et la Syrie, n'était en fait que la conséquence logique et prévisible de notre partialité à l'égard de l'Etat hébreu et du refus de celui-ci de se retirer des territoires égyptiens, syriens et palestiniens occupés par la force en 1967. Il semblerait donc que l'approvisionnement régulier en pétrole du Moyen-Orient ne pourrait être assuré que si on cessait de soutenir l'attitude agressive et expansionniste d'Israël et si la justice était rétablie dans cette région, car seule la justice pourrait y amener paix et stabilité.

-Vous avez probablement raison. Néanmoins il y a plus important: Israël est seul à pouvoir empêcher les Etats islamiques de la région de s'unir et de menacer le monde libre.

-M. le président, je regrette de vous dire que la propagande sioniste vous a fait subir un lavage de cerveau soigné: tout d'abord, la notion de «monde libre», valable du temps du rideau de fer, est complètement périmée de nos jours car tous les pays sont maintenant libres ou en passe de le devenir. Dans le processus inéluctable vers la démocratie, Israël ne fait que retarder la transformation de certains pays totalitaires du Moyen-Orient en pays véritablement libres. Quant à «l'Empire musulman» que vous semblez tellement redouter, il a bien existé et était très puissant au Moyen-Age. Alors seulement il pouvait représenter une menace aux yeux de certains catholiques superstitieux et ignorants, dont Nostradamus (le soi-disant astrologue). Mais à l'aube du XXI^{ème} siècle!

-Et le phénomène Khomeiny en Iran, et la poussée du fondamentalisme en Jordanie, en Palestine, en Egypte, en Algérie et ailleurs?

-C'est un fait bien établi, M. le président, que lorsque l'homme est accablé (et quand je dis l'homme, j'embrasse, si j'ose dire, la femme), il ne lui reste que Dieu vers qui se tourner. Supprimons le sentiment de frustration résultant de la misère, de l'ignorance, de l'injustice et de l'insécurité et nous supprimerons le fondamentalisme, non seulement dans les pays islamiques mais aussi en Inde et même en Irlande! Arrêtons donc les méfaits d'Israël au Moyen-Orient et nous y supprimerons toute forme d'intolérance.

-Et dire qu'Israël nous coûte trois milliards par an!

-Pardonnez-moi, M. le président. Il nous coûte près de dix milliards, sans compter le tort et la haine qu'il nous cause.

-Ah, là non, Aristote, pas dix milliards: trois seulement! Quatre à la rigueur.

-Place aux chiffres. Pour l'année fiscale en cours, nous avons déjà consenti à Israël trois milliards en aide directe, sept cent millions en matériel militaire et quatre cent millions en prêts pour loger les immigrés soviétiques.

-Tout cela ne fait que quatre milliards cent millions.

-Il y a encore environ six milliards que le service d'impôts sur le revenu va perdre cette année à cause d'Israël.

-Six milliards?

-Parfaitement: d'après la loi relative à l'impôt sur le revenu, les dons faits par les personnes ou les entreprises américaines à nos organisations charitables ou à celles des pays amis (dont bien sûr Israël), sont déduits des bénéfices taxables du donneur. Comme l'Agence juive recevra en principe cette année des dons de près de dix milliards des huit millions de juifs américains, ces dons, une fois déduits des bénéfices des donateurs, nous feront perdre six milliards en impôts!

-Si Israël recevait ainsi dix milliards par an, pourquoi a-t-il tellement poussé pour finaliser le prêt de quatre cent millions?

-M. le président, l'Agence juive reçoit bien en principe dix milliards, mais Israël n'en perçoit qu'à peine un seul.

-Est-ce une devinette Aristote?

-Non, M. le président. Simplement lorsque un Juif américain fait un don, disons de mille dollars, l'Agence juive lui remet un reçu

pour dix mille ou plus. C'est le montant marqué sur le reçu qui est déduit de ses bénéfices taxables.

-Bonté divine! On devrait au plus vite modifier cette loi. Mais comment faire avec le lobby juif sur les bras?

-Il faudrait mieux méconter huit millions de Juifs que deux cent quarante millions d'Américains non-juifs. Tôt ou tard, le pot aux roses sera découvert; on aura alors un «Taxgate» ou un «Jewgate» avec, sûrement, une flambée terrible d'anti-sémitisme. Un jour! Mais comment contourner l'opposition immédiate du lobby juif?

-Faites seulement réunir des preuves sur la pratique de la fraude (je suis sûr que vous y arriverez). Une fois en possession de documents suffisants, menacez de les divulguer si la loi n'était pas amendée au plus vite.

-Génial! Mais comment dissocier le lobby juif d'Israël?

-Simplement en amendant ladite loi. A ce moment-là, les Juifs américains n'auront plus aucun intérêt à soutenir Israël et vous aurez les mains libres pour faire ce que bon vous semble au Moyen-Orient.

Bush commençait à ressentir un mal de crâne terrible. Aristote venait de lui proposer le moyen de neutraliser le tout puissant lobby juif, après lui avoir déjà montré comment envoyer au tapis le lobby du pétrole et celui des fabricants d'armement. «Je pourrais alors vraiment gouverner, pensait-il, à condition toutefois que j'en réchappe». Il prit congé d'Aristote pour se donner le temps de se ressaisir.

Sabri Farah

Le déserteur

Vous avez aimé les bonnes pages que nous avons publiées ces dernières semaines du roman de Noël Favrelière intitulé «Le déserteur»? Vous souhaitez connaître la suite et la fin de cette histoire mouvementée? Sachez que vous pouvez emprunter le livre à la bibliothèque du Centre Culturel Français, où il est à votre disposition.

Economy

Trade officials gather for make-or-break talks

BRUSSELS (AP) — Hundreds of officials from around the world gathered Saturday in a last-ditch effort to end disputes over farm subsidies and other issues threatening to scuttle an attempt to reform world trade.

About 2,500 officials were expected to arrive in Brussels over the weekend to get ready for Monday's start of a final week of hard bargaining in the 107-nation Uruguay Round.

The four-year round of talks, named for the country where they began, are the most comprehensive trade negotiations ever.

But even before they sat down to deal, some officials said there is not enough time to complete their ambitious goals.

A British official, demanding anonymity, said: "It is now impractical that the round could be completed in its entirety next week."

The ministers, he said, may make key political decisions and leave it up to aides to fill in the details of an agreement during the remainder of December and in January.

Or, he said the issues could prove so difficult to resolve that the talks would be broken off and resumed at a later date. But he said such an option could be dangerous and "not all that easy to recover."

"If the round ends (this) week, it's going to end in failure," said Jeffery Schott, research fellow at the Institute of International Economics in Washington.

"At best, it can provide some political breakthroughs on the issues that negotiators have been unable to even talk about," he said.

The Uruguay Round is designed to draw up a new agreement that would overhaul the world trading system by, among other things, writing new rules and reducing tariffs — a sort of tax levied on goods imported by a country — and other barriers to trade in 15 areas.

Those include agriculture, manufactured goods, textiles and such services as banking, transportation and telecommunications. World merchandise trade reached \$3.1 trillion in 1989.

The main stumbling block to an agreement is a sharp dispute between the United States and the European Community (EC) over making deep cuts in government payments to farmers.

The U.S. government, backed by Australia, Argentina and others, wants the EC to strip away much of its expensive network of farm support programs, making cuts ranging from 75 per cent to 90 per cent.

The 12-nation trading bloc, also known as the common market, has so far refused, offering a 30 per cent trim in limited areas.

France and Germany have been the most resistant to further cuts, although the German government, anxious about the farm vote in Sunday's nationwide elections, may ease its stand once the balloting is out of the way.

The United States and poorer nations heavily dependent on farm exports contend that a new

trade agreement would be worthless without a weighty package on agriculture.

As a result, officials said the farm fight will have to be resolved early in the week if other issues are to be tackled.

The dispute over agriculture "is likely to be brought to a head quite quickly in the first half of the week," said the British official.

The middle of the week has been dubbed in this French-speaking capital as "crisis Wednesday" or "crisis Wednesday," meaning a crisis in the talks could erupt Wednesday.

The United States and the European Community are also at odds over new rules — there are none now — covering the \$680-billion annual trade in a banking, tourism, construction, telecommunications and other services.

The EC wants the United States to go along with a non-discriminatory clause so that trade concessions granted to one nation must be given to all partners in the accord. This is called "most favoured nation" treatment.

But in a last-minute demand, the United States has insisted that aviation, shipping and telecommunications be exchanged in negotiations over rules governing intellectual property rights, or protection of ideas, such as copyrights, trademarks and patents.

The United States contends copyright piracy and counterfeiting, much of it in developing nations, have cost American

Riyadh writes off Egypt's debts

RIYADH (AP) — King Fahd has endorsed writing off \$4.5 billion in loans to Egypt, apparently as a reward for Egypt's support in the Gulf crisis.

The debt waiver had been reported previously, but the king's decision Friday made it official.

A royal court edict late Friday said a Saudi delegation to a planned joint Egyptian-Saudi Arabian committee would "execute" that order.

Egypt is the leading Arab country siding with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait against Iraq in the Gulf, contributing the largest non-Western contingent to the multinational troop buildup in the standoff with President Saddam Hussein over Iraq's Aug. 2 invasion of Kuwait.

Egypt's role has proved to be a windfall for President Hosni Mubarak's government as the United States and the Arab allies are now writing off \$14 billion in debt.

That is almost one-third of its \$50 billion debt that for years has crippled the Egyptian economy.

Forgiveness of a \$6.7 billion Egyptian debt to the United States was part of a foreign aid programme Congress approved and sent to U.S. President George Bush before adjourning its session late October.

Other billions of dollars for which Egypt has been forgiven are from other oil-rich Gulf Arab states, such as the United Arab Emirates and Qatar.

Saudi Arabia and these

countries already made their intentions clear about calling off the Egyptian debts on a tour that Mubarak made through the Gulf after Aug. 2.

The joint Egyptian-Saudi Arabian committee meeting in Cairo had been scheduled to start Saturday.

But it was postponed until Wednesday following Bush's surprise offer Friday to send Secretary of State James Baker to Baghdad for talks with Iraqi leaders on the Gulf crisis.

Egyptian officials said the postponement was at Saudi Arabia's request. Saudi sources said Cairo asked for the postponement.

The committee, which oversees political, economic and other cooperation between the two countries, was set up after the early 1988 restoration of ties between Saudi Arabia and Egypt.

The Cairo meeting will be its third since then, and the sources said it will review the latest developments of the Gulf crisis on the political side.

Officials said it would cover an exchange of ratification documents for a major accord laying the framework for economic cooperation.

The two sides will discuss a "joint free market," the sources said.

They explained that this would practically mean free exchange of goods between the two countries if approved.

Maritime transport would be discussed as well as a planned causeway linking the two countries at the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula, they added.

U.S., Saudi Arabia to hold talks on oil

RIYADH (AP) — U.S. Energy Secretary James Watkins was expected to arrive Saturday for talks on the oil market situation and the kingdom's drive to boost oil output following Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

Watkins was to spend a day in Riyadh for talks with Oil Minister Hisham Nazer before travelling to the eastern province. Site of most of the kingdom's oil wells and scene of a huge multinational military buildup against Iraq.

Saudi Arabia, sitting on more than 25 per cent of the world's oil reserves, is a key element in helping oil market stability.

Helping to make up for the cutoff in exports from Iraq and Kuwait, Saudi Arabia is now producing more than 8.2 million barrels a day, a 57 per cent increase over its pre-crisis level.

Nazer has said he expects production to reach 8.5 million barrels a day by the end of the year.

Despite the threat of war over Iraq's Aug. 2 occupation of Kuwait, Saudi Arabia is proceeding with an ambitious \$15 billion project to expand capacity to 10 million barrels a day.

An expansion plan drawn up before the crisis called for reaching that level over the next eight to 10 years. But now the kingdom is considering accelerating the timetable, with dates of 1994 or even end-1992 being mentioned.

No official decision has been announced.

"Everybody has been very impressed with how fast Aramco has been able to bring their production up," said an oil industry executive, speaking on condition of anonymity.

While Saudi Aramco is now wholly Saudi owned, the original American owner giant companies are still major partners in the operation.

The source said that Nazer is likely to ask Watkins to "use his resources to do anything he can to help with the accelerated expansion."

That may include speeding up the acquisition of industrial equipment and the hiring of new Saudi Aramco employees.

Italy takes new look at nuclear energy

ROME (R) — Italy, the only European Community (EC) country to dismantle an operating nuclear programme, has been forced to think again as the Gulf crisis sends oil prices soaring.

Nuclear energy is cheap, reliable and increasingly safe, say a growing number of Italian industrialists and politicians.

But their plans to avoid over-dependence on oil are still bitterly opposed by the country's strong Green lobby.

The world's sixth-biggest economy is almost totally dependent on imported oil, 36.6 per cent of it from the Gulf.

Every dollar per barrel increase in the price of oil adds around 900 billion lire (\$800 million) to Italy's annual fuel bill.

The price of a barrel of 15-day Brent, the North Sea market crude (second month), rose from some \$21 on August 1, the day before Iraq invaded Kuwait, to highs of \$40 in October, although it has fallen recently to \$30 or so.

"There is no immediate solution to an almost total dependence on imports and oil to meet our demand," the employers' organisation Cofindustria has said. "Nuclear energy is the only valid alternative."

In 1987, a national referendum voted to ban nuclear energy for five years after the Soviet nuclear power plant explosion in Chernobyl.

Ministers and industrialists are already pressing the government to look ahead, bearing in mind the long lead time between research and production.

In November Prime Minister Giulio Andreotti urged a reconsideration of the nuclear ban. He said it was time to take a more pragmatic approach to nuclear power in the light of energy demand and new technologies which can guarantee safety.

He said parliamentary debates before the moratorium had demonstrated a lack of "scientific sense...and short sighted decisions."

An energy saving plan drawn up by Industry Minister Adolfo Battaglia provides for a 430 billion lire (\$387 million) research budget on new "safe" nuclear technology.

"We are looking at technology which would close down the plant automatically if anything went wrong," Battaglia said.

He was referring to reactors with passive safety features which need no human intervention if an accident occurs.

Italy was the odd one out in the EC in renouncing nuclear energy after Chernobyl, he said.

"Look at France which produces 75 per cent of its energy needs from nuclear power, Spain 40, Germany 35 and we none. Why should we be the last of the class?"

He said it was ironic that Italy bought electricity produced from nuclear power from France at a low cost. "The French are still thanking us for the referendum," he added.

Battaglia said Italy was importing annually around 90 million tonnes of oil which cost the country \$20 billion.

This month the commercial television station, Retequattro, conducted a poll which showed 29 per cent of 1,400 viewers in favour of conventional nuclear power, 46 per cent in favour providing it was "super safe" and 25 totally against.

Massimo Scalia, president of the Green party said "this type of safe nuclear reactor does not exist anywhere in the world, to speak of a safe nuclear reactor is to speak of nothing."

"Those who are agreeable to reopening the nuclear issue would not be happy to have a nuclear power station in their town."

A total of over 5,000 megawatts was lost from the ditching of the nuclear programme in 1987, costing the electricity board Ente Nazionale per l'Energia Elettrica (ENEL) some nine trillion lire (\$8.5 billion).

British, French tunnellers meet under English Channel

FOLKESTONE, England (R) — Engineers digging a railway tunnel under the channel broke through the last dividing rock Saturday and joined Britain to mainland Europe for the first time since the ice age.

Workers from the French and British sides knocked down the last wall of chalk to merge their two tunnels into one, connecting Britain with continental Europe and allowing the first land crossing between the two in 8,000 years.

Champagne flowed and triumphant cheers went up in the crowded tunnel as the breach was made, 30 metres below the seabed and 22 kilometres from Britain and 15 kilometres from France.

The two national work teams poured through the narrow gap opened in the rock to greet one another with hugs and handshakes and to share a champagne toast.

The tunnel breakthrough was hailed on both sides as a milestone on the road to European unity.

"C'est superbe," said one French tunneller, savouring the sense of history being made after three years' hard digging.

"Great," was the verdict from the British side, delivered by the tunnel project's technical director, Colin Kirkland.

French President François Mitterrand said it was a "striking sign of the vitality of the two countries and the efficiency of their cooperation."

British Prime Minister John Major said in a statement: "This is one of the great engineering feats of all time, and a symbol of the opportunities that will exist throughout the new Europe."

The middle passage was cleared by two workers chosen by ballot, one from each tunnelling team. They shook hands and exchanged flags to shouted greetings in broken French and English and cries of "vive la France."

The tunnel will be a service passage between the two railway tunnels, which, when completed, will carry passengers and freight the 50-kilometre journey under the channel.

Groups of workers and officials set off by rail from the tunnel entrances to become the first people to make the land crossing between Britain and France since the ice age, when the channel, a 40-kilometre divide, was created.

The French and British transport ministers, Michel Delebarre and Malcolm Rifkind, also met underground.

Saturday's breakthrough draws a reluctant Britain closer to Europe as part of the moves toward a single market in 1992.

"One feels one is a European," said Sir John Grugeon, chairman of the county council in Kent, where the British tunnel entrance lies.

An excited French television commentator compared the event to man's first steps on the moon, saying the name of tunneller Philippe Cozette would enter the history books alongside that of American astronaut Neil Armstrong.

But French television said there was notably less enthusiasm in Britain.

Matsushita to buy MCA for \$5.8 b

WASHINGTON (AP) — Matsushita Electric Industrial Company expects to spend about \$5.8 billion, most of it through short-term borrowing, to acquire U.S. entertainment giant MCA Incorporated.

In a filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Matsushita said it expected to raise \$1 billion of the estimated purchase price through internally generated funds and the remaining \$4.8 billion through the sale of commercial paper, or short-term corporate loans.

In previous reports, the deal was valued at just over \$6 billion.

The deal, the largest Japanese purchase of a U.S. company, was announced Monday but some of the details had not been previously disclosed.

The SEC documents also said that Allen and Company, a New York investment banking firm acting as Matsushita's financial adviser, stands to collect \$8 million in fees once the Japanese company acquires more than 50 per cent of MCA's shares. Even if the deal doesn't go through, Allen and Co. could make \$2 million if someone else steps in and buys more than 50 per cent of MCA at a higher price.

Russian republic backs privatisation of land

MOSCOW (R) — The biggest Soviet republic, the Russian Federation, on Friday approved in principle a bill introducing private ownership of land, but the controversial reform could still be emasculated by conservative amendments.

A special Congress of People's Deputies, the highest body of republican authority, voted overwhelmingly for the measure as part of a package of agrarian reforms which many economists regard as the key to improving food supplies.

But the legislation was likely to face stiff conservative opposition before final approval and amendments could strip it of the crucial references to privatisation and buying and selling of land.

"The congress affirms the equality of multiple forms of property: State, kolkhoz-cooperative, private, collective shareholding," the resolution said.

It also called for a reinforcement of "the mechanism of legal regulation of buying and selling of land in order to rule out speculation and its irrational use."

Virtually all agricultural land in the Russian Federation is controlled by more than 24,000 state-run (sovkhoz) and collective (kolkhoz) farms.

Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev told a meeting of leading intellectuals this week he was opposed to privatisation of land.

"I am resolutely against private property on land," he said.

The Soviet leader also told a Moscow Communist Party plenary session that he favoured privatisation, but for small enterprises mostly in the services sector. "I think it will be small enterprises...where we have a lot of problems."

His comments will disappoint radical reformers and potential investors in the Soviet Union, who want the government to act decisively in breaking the state's stranglehold on the economy.

AMMAN EXCHANGE RATES					
Saturday, December 1, 1990					
Central Bank official rates					
	Buy	Sell		Buy	Sell
U.S. dollar	660.0	664.0	Japanese yen (for 100)	497.9	500.9
Pound Sterling	1263.1	1290.8	Dutch guilder	391.1	392.4
Deutschemark	439.3	441.9	Swedish crown	117.4	118.1
Swiss franc	517.1	520.2	Italian lira (for 100)	58.6	59.0
French franc	130.6	131.4	Belgian franc (for 10)	213.4	214.7

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Cinema **RAINBOW** Tel: 625155

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Cinema **CONCORD** Tel: 677420

LOCK UP

Sylvester Stallone

Show: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

Cinema **PHILADELPHIA** Tel: 634144

ROOF TOPS

Show: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30 p.m.

Cinema **NUJUM** Tel: 675571

APPOINTMENT WITH THE PRESIDENT

Kamal Al Shinnawi, Ilham Shahin, Farouq Al Fishawi

Show: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 p.m. Friday & Sunday extra show at 11:00 a.m.

Cinema **PLAZA** Tel: 699238

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Arabic

Show: 12:30, 3:15, 5:15, 7:15, 9:45 p.m.

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Baltic lawmakers call for Soviet troop withdrawal

VILNIUS, USSR (Agencies) — The parliaments of the three Baltic republics opened their first-ever joint session Saturday with demands that Soviet troops end their "occupation" and that Western countries recognise their independence.

"The occupation of the Baltic states... is a question of European security," Estonian President Arnold Rüütel said in a keynote address.

The focus of the day-long meeting was debate on five proposed declarations, including one for the removal of Soviet troops, and an appeal that the three republics become full members of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE).

"An appeal to the parliaments of the world" warned that the "continuing threat by the Soviet Union to use force against the territorial integrity and political independence of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania directly contradicts the Soviet Union's renewed pledges outlined in the Paris charter and joint declaration" signed at the CSCE summit two weeks ago.

Estonia initially balked at attending the joint parliamentary session, called by Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis, but the strong keynote speech by the Estonian president indicated fundamental agreement on major issues.

Latvian President Ananols Gorbunov also spoke, urging Moscow to conduct serious independence negotiations with the Baltic republics.

About 200 Latvian and 100 Estonian legislators attended the meeting with the 220 members of the Lithuanian parliament.

All three Baltic governments say they will not sign a union treaty proposed by Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev to preserve the unity of the 15 Soviet republics and the central authority of the Kremlin.

As the session got underway, demonstrators gathered outside, and they had divided opinions about the proceedings inside parliament.

About 200 protesters carried signs in Russian saying "yes to the union treaty" and "no to a division of the USSR," about 600 demonstrators, many waving yellow, green and red Lithuanian flags, sang patriotic songs in their native Lithuanian.

The two groups stood peacefully about 10 metres apart. Police watched but did not intervene.

The most controversial proposal at the joint session, according to Estonian delegates, said that "the USSR army deployed in our countries is an occupational army and for this reason, peaceful, civil actions demanding its withdrawal are legitimate."

"In demanding the withdrawal

of the Soviet army we should not take actions that could create hardships for military families or violate their human rights," the proposed declaration said.

Meanwhile, a large hardline bloc in the Soviet parliament Saturday demanded decisive steps from President Mikhail Gorbachev to halt the country's disintegration and said a conservative must get a new post of vice president.

Delegates to the founding congress of the Soyuz, or union, faction also demanded the resignation of Interior Minister Vadim Bakatin, saying he was soft on separatist violence and economic crime.

And leaders warned Gorbachev the group, which claims 468 members among the 2,050 deputies to the full Soviet parliament, would reserve the right to demand a vote of no confidence in his leadership.

"We believe the vice president must take on responsibility for domestic policy and be chosen on a competitive basis," Yuri Blokhin told about 300 delegates and guests.

Later, Blokhin said the group would look for its candidate from among "the most decisive members of the senior leadership in the republics."

The Soyuz meeting, called to prepare for the Dec. 17 opening

of the full Soviet parliament, the Congress of People's Deputies, raises the chances of a two-pronged attack on Gorbachev — from both a resurgent right and the restive left.

Joining the Soyuz leadership on stage for the session was Rafik Nishanov, chairman of one of the two houses of parliament.

In another sign of Soyuz's strength, the head of the giant Moscow Communist Party, Yuri Prokofiev, listened attentively from the hall. Prokofiev said he was there as an observer but might join the faction.

Generally a Gorbachev supporter, Prokofiev told reporters the troubled times facing the country demanded a strong, independent vice president.

"It should not be someone just to carry (Gorbachev's) briefcase," he said.

The faction — formed last February in the Soviet parliament but since expanded to include all levels of elected councils, or Soviets — was expected to approve a resolution demanding the preservation of the Soviet Union's present size and territory.

"We must recognise the fact that the people demand an active central government. The president must defend the centre," said Soyuz founder Viktor Alksnis.

Bush vetoes intelligence bill

WASHINGTON (AP) — President George Bush has vetoed a 1991 intelligence bill, saying it could have a chilling effect on American diplomacy because it would restrict other countries carrying out covert actions for the United States.

The legislation authorises all U.S. intelligence activities in the year that began Oct. 1 and contained provisions aimed at gradually winding down American support for covert conflicts in Afghanistan, Angola and Cambodia.

Bush said he was withholding his signature from the measure primarily because it included under a new definition of "covert action" any U.S. request of a foreign government or private citizen to mount a covert action on America's behalf.

In a statement issued late Friday, Bush said the bill would have forbidden U.S. officials from the "expression of certain views" without prior notice to Congress.

Such a legal restriction could "seriously impair the effective conduct of our nation's foreign relations," Bush said. It could "have a chilling effect on the ability of our diplomats to conduct highly sensitive discussions concerning projects that are vital to our national security."

House of Representatives Intelligence Committee Chairman Anthony C. Beilenson, who got no advance notice of the veto, said in a statement that he was "deeply disappointed" by the move and noted that he had been told the measure was going to be signed.

"This episode certainly will not contribute to the maintenance of what has been, up to this point, an excellent working relationship between the intelligence committees and the administration," Beilenson said.

And he said the provision Bush objected to was simply an attempt by Congress to ensure that the same standards apply to covert operations whether they are carried out directly or indirectly.

The bill, approved on Oct. 25, would authorise spending of roughly \$30 billion for intelligence activities around the globe.

Bangladesh troops open fire at protesters killing 7

NEW DELHI (AP) — Bangladeshi troops opened fire on anti-government demonstrators Saturday in the capital, Dhaka, killing at least seven people, according to reports reaching India.

Bomb blasts and rifle fire echoed through several areas of Dhaka after a curfew was lifted during daytime hours in an effort to restore a semblance of normality following President Hussain Muhammad Ershad's declaration of a state of emergency Tuesday night.

Traffic came to a halt and shops closed Saturday in Dhaka during an all-day strike to demand the lifting of the state of emergency and Ershad's removal. Offices remained open.

At least seven people were killed in a clash with security forces in the Mirpur neighbourhood on the western edge of Dhaka, according to witnesses whose information was relayed through unofficial channels to neighbouring India. Strict news censorship is in effect in Bangladesh under the state of emergency.

Sheik Hasina, one of the top opposition leaders, put the death toll at eight, according to a statement from her Awami League Party.

Another opposition party, Jamaat-E-Islami, said nine people were killed in the Mirpur clash.

Police also fought with anti-Ershad demonstrators in the port city of Chittagong when the curfew was lifted for 10 hours Saturday, according to local residents. They said at least eight people were injured.

About 600 officers in the merchant navy vowed to stop work until the state of emergency is lifted, the unofficial reports from Chittagong said.

Ershad, a 60-year-old former army general who seized power in a bloodless coup in 1982, imposed the state of emergency after six weeks of increasingly violent protest by opposition parties and university students demanding his resignation.

Under the emergency, civil liberties have been suspended, round-the-clock curfews imposed and censorship ordered for the news media. Newspapers have not appeared since Wednesday because of a journalists' strike to protest the censorship.

The main opposition parties, whose leaders are in hiding, called a nationwide dawn-to-dusk strike Saturday to protest the state of emergency and to press their demands for Ershad to step down.

The government subsequently lifted the curfew from 6 a.m. to 4 p.m. (0000 GMT to 1000 GMT).

At midmorning Saturday, the streets of the city of 7 million were jammed with people walking to work, said the unofficial reports. Office workers generally have reported to their jobs during the opposition's frequent calls, and Saturday was the monthly payday.

Around the city, small groups of protesters chanted "set fire to the throne of Ershad," before ducking out of sight when they spotted government patrols.

Riot police lashed out with steel-tipped clubs to disperse about 200 television and theatre actors who demonstrated outside the National Press Club in the centre of Dhaka according to the unofficial reports. At least one person was seriously injured, these reports said.

Police patrolled the capital in jeeps, sometimes in convoys of six or seven vehicles, according to witnesses in Dhaka.

Support for the opposition parties' campaign to force Ershad to resign has reached a level never before seen in the eight years since he seized power, according to the reports reaching India.

But defence analysts and diplomatic sources in New Delhi believe Ershad can ride out the storm as long as the armed forces stay loyal. So far there has been no sign of a revolt within the military, they said.

side government house, where Bush will meet with President Carlos Menem, and at a monument to the dead from the 1982 Falkland Islands war in which the United States sided with Britain against Argentina.

"We can't forget that the United States had a lot to do with Argentina's military defeat," said Simon Lazara, a national deputy for the Socialist Party.

Argentina claims Britain stole the South Atlantic islands 157 years ago.

"Bush is coming to supervise the implementation of President Carlos Menem's policies of hunger and misery," stated the committee organising the protests.

Chile's Communist Party said it will stage rallies to protest alleged U.S. intervention in Chilean politics.

"Dignity and Chile's patriotic interest demand our people reject Mr. Bush's visit," said party leader Jose Sanfuentes.

In Venezuela, several hundred students from Caracas' Central University, who demonstrate regularly near their downtown campus against various Venezuelan government policies, this week chose Bush's visit as their theme.

As the march was breaking up late Thursday, about a dozen hooded youths stopped an empty bus owned by a local baseball team, doused it with gasoline and burned it, newspaper reports said.

Police used tear gas and fired warning shots, and a policeman was shot by an unidentified sniper, police source said.

Argentine protesters planned to gather in Plaza de Mayo out-

Amnesty: Cambodia improves treatment of political prisoners

BANGKOK (AP) — Cambodia's Communist government has taken significant steps to protect the rights of political prisoners, but serious abuses continue, Amnesty International says in a new report.

The London-based human rights group said it received information that about 33 political prisoners arrested between 1979 and 1986 remain imprisoned without being charged or put on trial.

It said three other political prisoners jailed after unfair political trials in 1980 also are reportedly still being held.

Six government officials who were arrested in May of this year apparently remain under some form of detention, but none has been charged with a criminal offense or brought to trial, the report said.

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3 more killed in South African township violence

CAPE TOWN (Agencies) — South African police said Saturday they found three black men shot and hacked to death in a township west of Johannesburg.

More than 900 people have died since August in township fighting between supporters of the African National Congress (ANC) and the politically more moderate Inkatha Freedom Party.

Police gave no details of the latest killings, which appeared to have happened shortly after ANC Deputy President Nelson Mandela warned supporters Friday that strong action would be taken against members who encouraged violence.

Mandela also backed a joint call for peace Thursday, after talks with leaders of the rival Pan Africanist Congress and Azanian People's Organisation.

Inkatha chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi refused to attend Thursday's meeting, which was organised by black Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu, a Nobel Peace Prize winner.

Themba Khoza, leader of Inkatha's youth wing, said in a statement Friday his followers would "fight to the last man to protect what we believe in."

He said Inkatha would counter an ANC campaign to force ethnic black town councils to resign.

The ANC opposes the councils because they are part of the white government's apartheid structure and because most were elected by fewer than a quarter of eligible township voters.

Khoza said the ANC would organise marches and boycotts to break the councils, but he said councillors should stand firm.

"We in the community do not want to kill you. Be brave, stand up, face the challenge I am talking about," he said.

In a speech after he received an honorary law degree Friday



Nelson Mandela

night, the ANC deputy president said principles of democratic practices extended to the group's members.

"There can be no denying that there have been instances of ANC supporters displaying intolerant behaviour and at times even employing strong-arm methods to bully political rivals into silence," Mandela said.

He called such actions "completely contrary" to ANC policy. Also Friday, a meeting of government, political and black homeland leaders urged an end to political intimidation and called for an urgent gathering of all parties to discuss negotiations on a new constitution.

President F.W. de Klerk's government has held talks with the ANC on ending apartheid and setting up formal negotiations on giving political power to the black majority. Under apartheid, the 5 million whites control the government and economy while the 30 million blacks have no national voting rights.

The government meeting, led by de Klerk, included Mangosuthu Buthelezi, leader of the KwaZulu homeland and the Inkatha Freedom Party.

Mozambique, rebels overcome main obstacle for ceasefire

ROME (R) — The Mozambican government and right-wing rebels said Saturday they had overcome one of the main obstacles to a ceasefire in the civil war which has cost a million lives during the last 14 years.

Delegations from the government and Renamo rebels signed an agreement to regroup all Zimbabwean troops in Mozambique in two strategic corridors to guard the road, railway and pipeline links between landlocked Zimbabwe and the Indian Ocean.

"I hope that this will in a short time be followed by a ceasefire agreement to end the war," Mozambican Transport Minister Armando Guebuza said after warmly shaking the hand of Renamo's "foreign minister," Raul Domingues.

The Italian-sponsored agreement, signed in a small religious community in Rome, calls for the estimated 10,000 Zimbabwean troops in Mozambique to start concentrating by Dec. 15 in two six-kilometre security zones.

One corridor will run from the Zimbabwean border to the Mozambican capital Maputo in the south. The other will go to the port of Beira, the country's second city, further up the coast.

The other main obstacle to a ceasefire in Mozambique has been Renamo's demands for a say in how the country's first free elections are to be organised.

"This is a very important moment in our history and very important for peace in Mozambique," Domingues said after the ceremony.

The bill, approved on Oct. 25, would authorise spending of roughly \$30 billion for intelligence activities around the globe.

side government house, where Bush will meet with President Carlos Menem, and at a monument to the dead from the 1982 Falkland Islands war in which the United States sided with Britain against Argentina.

"We can't forget that the United States had a lot to do with Argentina's military defeat," said Simon Lazara, a national deputy for the Socialist Party.

Argentina claims Britain stole the South Atlantic islands 157 years ago.

"Bush is coming to supervise the implementation of President Carlos Menem's policies of hunger and misery," stated the committee organising the protests.

Chile's Communist Party said it will stage rallies to protest alleged U.S. intervention in Chilean politics.

"Dignity and Chile's patriotic interest demand our people reject Mr. Bush's visit," said party leader Jose Sanfuentes.

In Venezuela, several hundred students from Caracas' Central University, who demonstrate regularly near their downtown campus against various Venezuelan government policies, this week chose Bush's visit as their theme.

As the march was breaking up late Thursday, about a dozen hooded youths stopped an empty bus owned by a local baseball team, doused it with gasoline and burned it, newspaper reports said.

Police used tear gas and fired warning shots, and a policeman was shot by an unidentified sniper, police source said.

Argentine protesters planned to gather in Plaza de Mayo out-

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The great Soviet food mystery: Why are the stores empty?

By Andrew Katell
The Associated Press

MOSCOW — The Soviet Union started with a good harvest and with a dose of market economics to help solve the country's economic problems.

But as the Russian winter takes hold, million residents of the Soviet capital are scurrying from store to store and lining up for hours to buy the little food available.

People are angry, worried and puzzled by shortages worse than most people can remember. Even though the harvest was good, there has been no improvement in the inefficient distribution system. And the situation has deteriorated because some farmers are holding back food, there is widespread hoarding and food is diverted to the black market.

"There has never been such hopelessness," said cashier Lyubov Kulikovskaya after desperate customers shouted and shoved in a line for dumplings, the only item for sale other than bread and cheap tea in grocery store no. 4 in southeast Moscow.

Signs that advertise "milk," "fish," "candy," "fruit" and "preserves" hang from the ceiling

above empty display cases. Muscovites, avid conspiracy lovers, talk of sabotage and boycotts.

"Somewhere, someone is working well so food doesn't reach the store," said Kulikovskaya.

The sense of foreboding in Moscow has aroused sympathy in the West, as the United States, Austria, Britain, Germany, Italy, Spain and Canada have offered to help feed the Soviets, at least in part to preserve the reforms of Mikhail Gorbachev.

Gorbachev has been touring the West to arrange emergency food shipments. He has promised to outline urgent food measures to the Soviet legislature soon.

On Friday, he issued a decree directing workers at businesses and schools to elect "workers' control committees" to check warehouses, trade organisations, stores to ensure there is no black marketing, theft or other misuse of food and consumer goods.

Few shoppers or Soviet officials believe there will be famine like ones that killed millions in the Volga region in 1921, the Ukraine in 1932-33 or Leningrad during the Nazi blockade of World War II.

But the fear of lean winter

months is widespread.

A recent poll found 62 per cent of the people questioned in 11 regions are afraid hunger is imminent. Worried that things will be worse tomorrow, shoppers are hoarding anything that will last.

"So far, people aren't starving. They'll throw something out to us," said an 80-year-old retiree, who gave only her first name, Olga. She stood outside store No. 4 after waiting in a line for meat. It ran out before her turn.

Larisa Smirnova, senior administrator of Moscow's biggest supermarket, the Taganka Gastro, believes domestic supplies are adequate but that Gorbachev is right to ask the West for help.

"It shows he cares about his people, and imports would help us get through this prolonged perestroika," she said, referring to Gorbachev's 6-year-old reform programme that many people blame for lowering living standards.

Smirnova says store shelves are bare because of panic buying. In one hour, for example, the Taganka store sold out two tons of oatmeal.

While some private U.S. charities are planning to help, the U.S. government is against food

relief for the Soviet Union, because it says it has no evidence of starvation.

European countries, especially Germany, take a different view and are shipping donated food. The director of one of Moscow's 33 regional food supply offices believes some countries are overreacting.

"There is much talk about hunger. Most is exaggeration. I don't believe it," said Alexander Savelyev, in charge of food supplies in the proletarian region of the capital.

Muscovites are so far getting by, albeit with a monotonous diet.

Wealthy Soviets can shop at well stocked private farmer's markets, where prices already are responding to the law of supply and demand. They can also find food in "commercial" sections of some state stores, where free-floating prices are at least twice the state-set level.

Such alternatives to the barren state stores are not affordable for those on low incomes.

Many Soviets can receive group orders through their workplaces, which trade their goods and services for food. Others get food under the table, from corrupt warehouse and grocery store

workers and truckers who deal on the side for the right price.

Losses in the first nine months of the year from theft reached 20 million rubles (\$36 million) in Moscow's state-owned Fruit and Vegetable Supply Organisation, 634,000 rubles (\$921 million) in the meat association and 123,000 (\$221